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ULTIMATE CONCEPTIONS OF FAITH

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BY

GEORGE A. GORDON
MINISTER OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1903

234.2Q
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Published October 1903

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TO THE STUDENTS
TO WHOM IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TO SPEAK
AND TO THE YOUNGER MINISTRY
WHOM THEY REPRESENT
WHOSE VOCATION IT WILL BE
IN AN AGE OF TRANSITION
TO FORM THE MIND IN CHRISTIAN BELIEF
AND TO SHAPE THE LIFE
IN CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOUSNESS
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

PREFACE

THIS book contains the lectures delivered in the autumn of 1902 in Yale University on the Lyman Beecher foundation. The first and third chapters were not given as lectures, but they are deemed essential to the course of thought; and of the remaining chapters only about two thirds could be read within the reasonable limit of time prescribed. While the book was originally written for publication, and substantially as it stands, it owes its existence wholly to the invitation with which its author was honored as Lyman Beecher lecturer. Although nothing could exceed the kindness with which the lectures were received both by the students and the faculty of the Divinity School, it should be said that upon the writer alone rests the responsibility for the opinions expressed and maintained.

A great tradition of power has descended to the Congregational ministry of New England, and through it to the Christian ministry throughout the country. In the opinion of the great

representatives of this service, the preacher was not a mere exhorter, or one whose duty was discharged by reading his people a practical lesson once or twice a week. He was the teacher of the people, the former of their minds in Christian belief, the thinker who covered their existence with the power of a consistent thought of the universe. The character both of the preacher and of the people rose up out of the high philosophy which they together held concerning man and man's world. It is impossible to measure the strength and the solace that came to the heroic generations of New England men and women from the ministry that controlled the issues of the heart through the authority of its teaching over the mind. The freedom of living under occasional and vagrant insights is dearly bought. The loss to life in the death of a ruling system of ideas is inexpressible. When the controlling scheme dies before its successor is born, all wise men must mourn. Chance thoughts, vagrant insights, may be all that can be obtained; but this is our sorrow, and not our boast. We look back upon our fathers, and behold for them the sweet heavens built into unity and dominion and power, and under them the obedient, awestruck, and yet hopeful world of men. We revere the

faith that commanded the reason while it exalted the soul.

The American pulpit has fallen, not upon evil days, but upon other days. The teaching that controlled our fathers has lost its authority. The loss has been inevitable. That teaching has gone into comparison with the whole higher thought of the world. Phœnix-like it must rise from its ashes; for in it are the "the truths that wake to perish never." That old teaching must rise out of the higher thought of the world purified, enriched, matured, no longer an idealism under the shadow of despair, but an idealism warranted by the best reason of the race, verified and anointed in the humanity of Christ and in the heart of his disciples. For those who are willing to tread this path, and to give themselves wholly to their ministry, the vocation of the preacher will become, more and more, the power that forms the intellect in Christian belief, and that shapes the life in Christian righteousness.

Another tradition of worth has descended to the New England preacher. The representative preachers in former times were accustomed to publish their systems of reasoned belief, that they might influence more widely the Christian community, and that they might acquaint their brethren in the ministry with their position in

the great world of faith. It is an easy, an altogether too easy triumph over these thinkers to quote against them Tennyson's famous lines: —

> "Our little systems have their day;
> They have their day and cease to be."

It is unjust thus to serve them while we reserve for others a different fate. There is but one sentence for all things human, executed in one case sooner, in another later. Let Tennyson broaden the special judgment into the universal: —

> "We pass; the path that each man trod
> Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds:
> What fame is left for human deeds
> In endless age? It rests with God."

The men to whom reference is made served their generation; to do more than this is given to few. This limited definable service is great, and in the character of a people it becomes an enduring service. Thus viewed these New England thinkers are seen to be of heroic size. Those ponderous volumes of divinity, with the shadow of death resting upon them, become profoundly significant. In purpose and in scope they are alive with human interest. Thus preachers honored their calling in those prophetic days; thus they honored the brotherhood of preachers; thus they fought their brave bat-

tle under the sense of a vanishing world. For upon their world, as upon a scroll, the judgment was written: —

> "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> Leave not a rack behind."

In recognition of the spirit and of the high custom of our predecessors the present volume is issued. It contains, in outline, the working theology of one who considers his calling the greatest opportunity for service that God has given to man. It is sent forth, not without a deep sense of its unworthiness, in the hope that it may do something to stimulate interest in the vocation of the preacher as the teacher of religion, and of the ideas essential to the life of the spirit; that it may animate among those now entering the ministry men of intellectual genius, and help to draw from them a contribution worthier than itself, toward the creation of the greater theology of the future; that it may aid in promoting among the brotherhood of preachers mutual understanding, and the sense of happy fellowship in the service of the highest ideals.

GEORGE A. GORDON.

OLD SOUTH PARSONAGE, Boston,
April 15, 1903.

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ULTIMATE CONCEPTIONS OF FAITH

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CHAPTER I

THE PREACHER AS A THEOLOGIAN

I

THE Greek equivalents of our English words theology and theologian are important as bringing one face to face with a fundamental and universal human interest. For the Greeks the theologian is a speaker about God or divine things, and in their language he is styled θεολόγος. His vocation is indicated by a verb, a noun, and an adjective transformed into a substantive, θεολογέω, to speak about God; θεολογία, the act of speaking about God, the calling or vocation of the person who thus speaks; θεολογική, speaking about God in the order of reason. Theology is thus, primarily, speech about the Supreme Being fired with insight, informed with knowledge, and guided by method; the theologian is one who discourses upon the sovereign meanings of existence. The discourse is that of a trained intel-

ligence; the speech is presumed to be coherent speech. It is, of course, inevitable that where this speech is thought to be of value it should be recorded, and thus become literature. It must be added that while this exposition provides for the theologian, it does not provide for the Christian theologian. He is one who thinks and speaks about God and divine things in the light of the teaching and achievement of Jesus Christ. He is one who studies the Ancient of Days under new conditions, who reads the sovereign meanings of existence in new light, and whose speech is supposed to be ordered, wise, reasonable speech.

Theologians are of two kinds, the professional and the non-professional. Theology is the exclusive calling of the professional theologian. He pursues his object with an outfit of learning, and with a precision of method peculiarly his own, and in a technical manner suited to his purpose. The vocation of the non-professional theologian is preaching; for him theology is not an interest standing alone or supreme. It is indispensable to him as a teacher and inspirer of religion; and he is a theologian because of the sovereignty of the religious interest. A parallel might be found in the bad fashion now prevailing of expounding the science of logic by mathematical formulæ; in order to be a logician it is necessary to become

a mathematician. The business man may be a political economist, the physician a biologist, the lawyer a contributor to the science of jurisprudence. Again, all the natural sciences assume the reality of the external world; therefore the scientist, because of his interest in physics or chemistry, may raise the ultimate question, What is the nature of the external world? He thus finds that his science leads inevitably to metaphysics. The history of science bears out the truth of this remark. Tyndall, Huxley, Haeckel, Wallace, and even Darwin, the purest of scientists, became involved in ultimate questions. They are transformed by the strength of their primary interest into non-professional metaphysicians. Herbert Spencer is an extreme instance; he is first scientist and then philosopher. He will serve to show how an intermediate vocation leads on to an ultimate, how inevitably any calling whose interests concern the character of the universe forces its radical and serious servant back upon fundamental issues. The man whose vocation is preaching is forced back by this very interest upon theology. Indeed, in the original and august meaning of the word, the preacher finds that theology is inseparable from his calling, that it is the essence and soul of it. Speech to God is the prayer which he offers for his people and for himself, and speech concerning God

and divine things is the burden of his message. He may not claim to stand among professionals; he falls below his privilege when he does not assert his right and vindicate it to stand among theologians.

In the vigorous and confident presentation of a single line of thought, it is nearly inevitable that one shall seem to make extravagant claims, and perhaps appear to fail in justice toward other ideas. It is very difficult to discuss the theory of state rights without appearing to nullify the power of the federal government. It is equally difficult to present the conception of federal sovereignty without seeming to obliterate the autonomy of the individual state. The same may be said of egoism and altruism in ethics, of individualism and socialism in the industrial order, of particularism and universalism in philosophy, of free-will and predestination in theology. These are examples of the acute form of the apparent injustice to one truth which is apt to result from the energetic presentation of another and complementary truth. All that a writer can do, where his purpose limits him to a particular aspect of a complex subject, is to make a general disclaimer, and then to trust to the good sense and honor of his reader. In writing of the preacher as a theologian, I shall try to be fair to the professional theologian. His vocation

seems to me to be absolutely indispensable. The work that he is set to do is of fundamental moment, and no one can do it who is without the learning or the leisure of the professional student and thinker. There are two sides to the shield, and it can do no harm to look at both. In an essay on the vocation of the preacher in its bearings upon theology, we should not expect to find praise of another vocation. Some things may be said in favor of the non-professional theologian, and "with charity toward all, and with malice toward none," I purpose to say them.

The professional theologian has played an immense part during the last fifty years. The old custom according to which the minister was the chief educator of young men for the preacher's calling has wholly disappeared. The training of those who aim at becoming preachers has passed entirely into the hands of the professional scholar. The professional theologian is a scholar and a teacher; he is in constant and ever wider contact with books, and he is in fellowship with elect youth. He has a further advantage. He goes over the same ground with a new class every year. He has the inestimable benefit of class suggestion, questioning, and criticism. He becomes a master in his subject; every great light upon it, historic and contemporary, is at his command. Thus the results of his study

ripen into a body of mature teaching, and he is in a position to issue books that may be justly regarded as the books of an authority in his subject. The equipment of the scholar and the vocation of the teacher have given an immense opportunity to the professional theologian.

When we consider the product of the professional theologian in literary achievement or in influence, his position is equally commanding. To the professional scholar we are indebted for the corrected texts of the Old Testament and of the New. To him we are under obligation for the new view of these Scriptures that has taken possession of the educated world; to him we go for scientific exegesis, historical learning, and results; and not infrequently he is the authority for the just sense of the relation of Christianity and its historic forms to the culture of mankind. In our own country the professional theologian is an increasing necessity and an increasing influence. He alone has the adequate learning and leisure to enter and occupy the new fields of interest; he alone can undertake thorough and fruitful research; he and his guild have become so essential that it would seem as if they possessed the right of eminent domain over the whole expanse of theology. In view of the achievements and influence of the last fifty years must we not confine the term

theologian to the eminent members in a society of scholars devoted to the study of religion? In view of the work that remains to be done is it not presumption in a preacher to think of his vocation as consistent with that of the theologian? Since theology has formed itself into a trust in the hands of professionals, and since the people are becoming more and more alive to the immense public benefits of this trust, is there any room left for the non-professional theologian, or any reasonable hope of influence?

Another question arises, Are the functions of the teacher and the preacher incompatible? Are those calls sometimes extended to ministers, in which they are invited to become the pastor and "teacher" of the church, framed upon an obsolete pattern? Is he the ideal preacher to whom the words of the Fifth Spirit in "Manfred" can be applied —

> "I am the Rider of the wind,
> The Stirrer of the storm;
> The hurricane I left behind
> Is yet with lightning warm"?

Is inspiration the only function of preaching? Is it no longer possible to trust to the power of ideas? Has the standard of intelligence fallen in the church while it has risen everywhere else in the community? Has the prophet himself sunk to the position of those who wait on tables? Is

the cry obsolete, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"? Is a great character a product possible without the mediation of an enlightened mind? Is belief about the universe of no account? Have believers ceased to care for coherent belief? Is there no hope for the churchgoer of gaining, through the somewhat grievous discipline, a wider vision, a nobler order of ideas, a more reasonable scheme of faith?

The ideas of faith and the order of ideas that we name theology belong to man as man. For certain purposes the technical treatment of these ideas is necessary; for certain ends a rigorous scientific procedure in theology is indispensable. Still this is only one form of theology. The same ideas may be treated with equal depth in another way. The method of Butler in the "Analogy" in dealing with the question of the future life is severer far than the method of Plato in the "Phædo." Is it on that account profounder, or more comprehensive, or more adequate? It is a conviction of mine that the profoundest of the essentially vital ideas of the race may be presented in forms level to the average earnest understanding. Kant's great question, "What makes experience possible?" as answered by him would be a hopeless puzzle to even the enlightened reader unaided by a good

teacher. But it is possible for that teacher to answer Kant's fundamental question in a manner level to the understanding of an earnest and open-minded farmer. Kant's question concerns the intelligence of man; his answer concerns man. And in the universal human interest of the question and the answer lies the possibility of a version of them not only for professional thinkers, but also for earnest and inquiring minds of every class. Theology is the work of the few. To do this work well, to supply versions of faith of a high technical order, will require the equipment and learning of the professional scholar and thinker. Theology is the work of the few for the many. It must appear in versions for the many. It is a national interest, it is a human interest; and in giving form to this interest the preacher may rise to the position of the theologian.

The requisite knowledge seems to many beyond the preacher. Art is long and time is fleeting. Even the scholar confesses his inability to reach a synthesis of belief. We live in departments, and the vision of the whole is a thing of yesterday. Let it become the hope of to-morrow. The width of the theologic field should not be a permanent discouragement. We have come upon a strange epoch, and we must not govern the world of man by its law. Long views are

essential if we would deal justly with great questions. Times of revolution in the thoughts of mankind are infrequent, and it would be unwise, when they do come, to find in them the law and limitation of intellectual work. The permanent results of learning and discovery are indefinitely compressible. A generation hence evolution with its new natural history of animal life and of man; the modern view of the Bible; the greater development of the teaching of Jesus; the spirit of justice and humanity, in the light of which we are trying to find the meaning of existence and the character of the universe, will be mastered as swiftly and as easily as the children now master the theory of the solar system inherited from Copernicus and his time. Fifty years ago there was not in Great Britain or in America a single scholar who comprehended the purpose of Immanuel Kant in his "Critique of Pure Reason." To-day thousands of educated youth, whose tastes incline that way, leave college for the differing vocations of life with a clear sense of Kant's purpose, and of the movement of German philosophy in the nineteenth century. The consensus of thinkers and scholars simplifies knowledge, and this consensus is bound, under scientific method, to cover ever wider fields of intellectual interest. The frontiers of learning have, in our time, called for the reclaim-

ing of the whole territory, but it cannot be so always. The frontiers must always remain a place of some confusion, but the normal thing is a vast and peaceful procession behind them. The human outlook has been for nearly a century heterogeneous and bewildering, and we are apt to conclude that we have entered upon a millennium of surprises, shocks, revolutions, and contradictions of historic opinion. These epochs have come; they will doubtless come again: but they come infrequently, and the interval is blessed with the vision of returning homogeneity and order. Axioms are the uncontradicted wisdom of mankind; under rigorous scientific method axioms are bound to multiply, and axioms are easily learned. We predict, therefore, an easier mastery of the intellectual world for the coming student and thinker, and a new chance for the non-professional theologian.

II

The generative nature of experience — one of the great insights of Aristotle[1] — has an important bearing here. Every science is a thought-structure growing out of the appreciation of fact. The ascertainment of the facts and the discovery of their value are the marks of true science. The initial necessity of every

[1] *Prior Analytics*, Book I. chap. xxx. 10–28.

science is the appropriate substance or matter of fact. Many there are who can conduct the conventional argument from the conventional premises; the hope of progress lies chiefly in the discovery of new premises. Theology has been, in certain periods not very remote, a matter of text-building, as of hewn stones from the quarries of the Old and the New Testaments. The *theologia sacra* is gone. A Bible infallible in all its parts, the perfect truth in every word, made theology an easy science in the light of traditional thinking. Historical study, and the acquisition of the historical sense, and the power to rest all thought on the strength and validity of its insight, have discredited *theologia sacra*.[1] This easy method is no longer respectable. Words, sentences, histories, letters, literatures, are symbols. They must be dissolved into the life of the spirit before a beginning can be made in the rational appreciation of them. A scientist without eyes and ears and hands, a scientist without senses, incapable of life through the senses, or wholly careless of life through the senses would be a novelty in his class. The scientist with the greatest initial advantage is he whose life through the senses is the widest and richest. Theology is an intellectual world either well or ill founded. The test is in the relation of this building of man

[1] Harnack, *Protestantism*, p. 24.

to the spiritual experience of man. Fantastic theologies curiously and elaborately wrought exist in vast dead volumes. There is in these volumes an abundance of vigor and acuteness; their deadness is in their unresponsiveness to the spirit in man. They have eyes that glare, but with no speculation in them. The theologian with the greatest initial advantage is he whose share in the sane spiritual life of mankind is deepest, in whom the significant religious moods find the noblest expression, and who is a constant and sympathetic student of contemporary religious experience. Valid theology is the just and inevitable expression in the forms of the intellect of the life of the spirit. It presupposes life; it is an expression in terms of reason of that life; the expression is called for by the implicit energy of the religious spirit, and in the call there is a note of rigor, a pressure as of moral necessity, which some day will be the great distinguishing mark of the resulting theology.

Here, then, is the commanding advantage of the preacher. If he is fit for his vocation he is in the spiritual life of the world. The generative power of experience is in constant operation under his eyes. He may be unequal to his privilege; the privilege is nevertheless his. Many a scholar has written about the Bible during the last fifty years with no living faith in religion,

and with no sympathy with the spiritual experience of which the book is the monumental symbol. In such cases the critic, literary and historical, is dealing with the coat of many colors, emptied of its human treasure, trying to conjecture from the circumstances in which the coat was found, and the condition of it, the fate of the beloved youth who wore it. To a critic of this character the Bible is at best but the sacred and sad surviving garment of a vanished race, of a perished religion. Much good guessing has been done by higher critics of this temper, and much clearing up of points of history. But for the thinker in this mood there are no premises for a theology. Even where the temper is believing and the spirit sympathetic the scholar who is in isolation from contemporary religious experience is at a disadvantage. Science is not to-day studied in books; it is conducted by experiment. The laboratory is the essential condition of modern science. The eyes must rest on the process of things; thought must wait upon reality. The world of learning is a world in books and in the minds of scholars and teachers. It is a world of infinite value; and yet it is incomplete. The scholar needs a share in contemporary religion and in contemporary religious activity. He needs access to the souls of men as they religiously bear in our time the

burden and heat of the day. He must look upon the contemporaneous religious life, he must observe the vast present-day operation of the human conscience, and catch, if he can, the song of the spirit immanent in the immediate process of the soul: —

> "At the whirring loom of time unawed,
> I weave the living mantle of God."

Here is the generative source of theology; here are the materials for a building of God, the premises for a valid construction for faith.

Sightless eyes will discover no stars even when the heavens are bright with their light. This does not mean that the wilderness is the place to find flowers. Opportunity is of inexpressible moment. The great procession is forever passing under the preacher's eyes, — birth and its sacrament of love, youth and its world of burning ideals, home with its burden and privilege, its history of unutterable depth and sanctity, its experience whose precious meanings no words can hold, its hopes like light piercing black clouds, its entire existence a texture woven of sunbeams and of darkness; man in the sum of his human relations, man in his attitude toward the Infinite, man at work and at rest, in sickness and in health, in shame and under the shadow of the cross, a doubter and a believer, defiant and in entire reconciliation to the will

of the Most High. The preacher is a dweller on the shores of the eternal deep. Its tides ebb and flow under his vision; its murmur and thunder are the minor and major of an anthem to which he is always an eager listener. If the preacher is without an understanding heart all this will avail nothing; but given the insight, here is an unequaled opportunity for discourse about God and divine things, in the grand unison of reason and passion. The preacher should be beyond all others prism-eyed, and what is to ordinary vision but common day should be to him full of auroral fires and sunset hues.

The vocation of the preacher is a stimulus to creative activity. It is this in two ways. It prohibits the scholar's ideal from taking exclusive possession of the preacher, and it calls for the fresh and, if possible, original treatment of the needs of the soul and of God's historic answer to them. It takes courage to say that learning may sometimes be a hindrance. It was said of Paul that much learning had made him mad; it is further said that of this kind of madness his accuser was a poor judge. There is no immediate danger of an epidemic of this malady among modern preachers. Probably the last charge to be brought to the preacher's door will be that of too much learning. If we should thank God for our ignorance the famous retort

of the Methodist would be in order: "Brethren, you have a great deal to be thankful for." This is, however, not the whole case. John Stuart Mill, in accounting for the philosophic failures of Sir William Hamilton, lays great stress upon the fact that Hamilton gave so much of his intellectual strength to mere acquisition. There remained for the independent treatment of the problems of philosophy only a fraction of Hamilton's time and strength. The ideal of the scholar crowded into a corner the ideal of the thinker. And here the remark may be pertinent that in the history of philosophy only two minds of the first order have been scholars in the strict sense of the word. These two are Aristotle and Hegel. Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibnitz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant were educated men, with free access to the previous intellectual treasure of the world; but not one of them was a high technical scholar, not one of them was, properly speaking, a learned man. The distinction of these men was not learning; it was constructive genius. They were men of original insight, makers and builders in the world of thought. The same remark is of nearly equal application to the makers of theology. Origen and Calvin are exceptions; they were great thinkers and great scholars. With these exceptions, the governing thinkers in theology were

not scholars; as we shall see later, they were preachers. The conclusion that the ideal of the scholar is in all but the rarest instances inimical to the ideal of the thinker is, therefore, not so audacious as at first sight it might seem. General mastery of the world's wisdom, and valid insight into the meaning of one's generation and its movements of thought and life, do not make one a scholar; they are possible for the preacher, and they leave him free, while they enrich and direct his powers, for original work.

The call for the first-hand treatment of man's higher needs, and of God's historic response to them, is of great moment. The pure in heart shall see God. There is no beatitude more needed than this for the preacher; and to reach it no other man has an equal opportunity. The work of making sermons in the intelligent and reverent service of life has this for its issue, — sometimes its far-off issue, always its delayed, and yet for the competent its sure issue, — the steadier vision of divine things. The intellectual life of a competent and worthy minister puts on a form of its own. He looks at the moral order of life, at the operation of human nature under the light and by the power of the gospel, not through the learning of the scholar, not through the crowding opinions and theories of other men,

but with his own intelligence. However well informed he may be, however industrious he may be to share more widely and deeply in the best wisdom of the race, his perception of his subject is immediate. His intellectual world may be far less elaborate than that of others, still it is whole and his vision of it is immediate and abiding. Here is an advantage with many disadvantages; yet it is an advantage. When we have said, and said truly, of a writer that he is less systematic, less learned, less mature in his thinking, less closely reasoned in his opinions than we could wish, than we can find in another, we cancel all these defects when we add that in his utterance we discover original vision of divine things. The seer, the witness of God and his doings, is of superlative value for theology; and into this mood of beholding, the competent preacher is pressed by the whole strength of his vocation. Among the worst preachers that have ever cursed the churches have been those who learned a system of theology in the seminary, and then went forth to preach it, knowing little or nothing of the vast moods of insight and love that gave to the theology in question whatever note of reality it may have possessed. The wreck of the traditional system of theology has issued in this infinite boon: it has forced the preacher into the supreme privi-

lege of his vocation, the immediate and abiding vision of the divine world in man and in man's history.

The preacher's vocation is a discipline in things essential and enduring. The permanent is the only stuff of which to construct a theology. The world of learning, like the world of fashion, has its fads. The human heart is an abiding reality, and the God who answers its needs is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. It is true that things eternal come through things temporal, that ideas and facts go together, that the actual is precious because it carries in its heart ideal meanings, that history is the great field for the study of man and the knowledge of God. It is likewise true that there are things essential and things accidental. The essential holds in itself the meaning of the world of passing detail, as the abiding tree holds the secret of its leaves. Facts are representative. For the purposes of Sir Isaac Newton one falling apple is as good as a million. Seize the queen bee and you control the swarm. After the representative fact has spoken, the rest have nothing new to add. They can but confirm. There were twelve apostles, twelve chosen witnesses of the career and spirit of Jesus Christ; and when the testimony became record the original number was reduced to three. The writings

of Peter and John and Paul represent apostolic Christianity; the silent apostles are providentially silent. Their case had been put in the best way before the world; they did not care to multiply words and add no new content to apostolic faith. Research is the vocation of the scholar, and no sensible man will cherish for it any sentiment other than honor. The scholar is often, as in the study of antiquity, the restorer of lost worlds, the recoverer of a vanished humanity. There are few things more affecting than the eagerness with which the literary and monumental remains of antiquity are sought for, the pious care with which they are collected, and the patient humanity by which through these symbols glimpses are obtained into the life of extinct civilizations. There can be no doubt that the gains are worth the pains. The single gain in an extended and chastened sense of humanity is more than recompense for all the toil. And yet it must be added that there is large waste of power and time in research. Think of the vast dust heaps of opinion that the scholar must sift for the sake of the grain of gold that may be in them. So much of the greatest learning is of baseless opinion. The vocation of the scholar is necessarily so much of a criminal procedure against the doings of knaves and fools. He must spend so much strength as intellectual

sheriff in running down and in executing immemorial errors. And while the scholar is thus engaged, for him the quarries are unworked, and the building of the house of the Lord has ceased. If the preacher is without the intellectual spoils of these incursions against the barbarians, he is secure against the diversion of power. "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved." This essential and devouring interest is the life of the preacher. For high and serious discourse about God and his world there is surely an advantage here.

The perspective of the preacher is on the whole the sounder. This is often denied, but I think without good reasons. That great teacher of theology and strangely interesting man, Edwards A. Park, is reported to have said to his students that in his system, which he naturally regarded, and not without weighty reasons, as the perfected Calvinistic system, there were many doctrines that could not be preached. I suppose that he had in mind the doctrines of predestination, election, inherited depravity, moral inability, and those akin to them. Whether Professor Park did or did not make the remark attributed to him, it is still true of every variety of the Calvinistic scheme. Universal determinism to all good might conceivably enough be preached;

for preaching might be one of the ways of bringing to pass this universal decree. But partial determinism is of no conceivable use, unless the Infinite himself does the preaching. For only he can know whom he has predestinated to eternal life. And while it is confessed that some are not predestinated to eternal life, this confession must fall like a paralysis upon the moral endeavor of mankind. Zeno, Calvin, Spinoza, and all other thinkers who find in what is what must be, and who make the necessity that now works for the elevation of men and again for their debasement the original and controlling principle of their scheme of the universe, are far away from the revelation of God in the life of the race. Again let it be said that the trouble is not with the presence of a sovereign moral necessity. That might be an infinite inspiration to the human soul. The difficulty is with a double, or a partial, or a contradictory necessity. And the court of final appeal is not the needs of a system of thought, but the profounder needs of human existence. To say of certain doctrines that they cannot be preached is from my point of view a complete confession of their worthlessness. The saying attributed to Professor Park reveals the perspective of the professional theologian, the man of system, the thinker away from the determining influence of life. A genuine preacher

would hardly have made this mistake; with him the primacy of life is an established fact. Whatever in the intellect is without meaning for man as he struggles up into the complete realization of his humanity is not even the shadow of truth. It must be for the servant of life a baseless fiction. The real is everywhere the minister to life; anything without which man can attain full manhood falls outside the circle of essential truth. A look into professional theology may be no more disheartening than a glance into the pastoral version of the same thing. Yet against the professional must be set the sin of jumbling together fundamental aspects of the universe and superficial, the essentials of faith and the accidents of human culture. For the genuine preacher life is an immense purifier of faith. In the service of the spirit the years bring the philosophic mind. The non-essential is shed like the morning dew from the wings of the bird. The creed is enlarged by reduction; the energy of belief, like Gideon's host, is increased by being cut down. The really great things stand out clear and high, and the mind elects to study them and to allow the rest to go. True perspective takes the place of conventional; where MacGregor sits, there is the head of the table. The priest at the altar of life is under many limitations, yet is his calling an emancipation from superficial interests

and side issues. Other things being equal, he is more likely than other men to carry into the work of the thinker a sure sense of the just gradation of values in life and in faith.

III

It should be borne in mind that if there is any theology in the Old Testament it is the theology of preachers. Moral theism is the creation of the Hebrew prophets. And the immense contribution to a true conception of God made by Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the prophet of the exile is a contribution from non-professional theologians. If the more we search the message of these men of transcendent spiritual genius the more we discover its incompleteness, at the same time it must be added that their originality is beyond doubt, and the imperishable residuum of their thought is as great as it is precious. Nor must it be forgotten that the supreme mind in theology is the mind of a preacher. Jesus Christ was a preacher. His discourse was ever about God; all human interests were lifted in his treatment of them into the presence of God. In a manner that for originality, simplicity, depth, and beauty is unapproachable he spoke the amazing content of his mind upon the meanings of human existence read in the light of the Infinite love. The sym-

pathies of Jesus are so divine, the tenderness and majesty of his character are so absorbing, that men neglect the mind that shines in the fragments of his teaching that remain. Whose lectures or sermons could bear the condensation to which the teaching of Jesus is subjected? What historic thinker would live as a thinker were only about fifty pages allowed for the expression of his thought, were he compelled to crowd into a pamphlet, in the form of a report, the entire order of his ideas? And under limitations which would prove fatal to any other great mind in history, the teaching of Jesus, as it appears, for example, in the concluding chapter of Wendt's book, is of the utmost impressiveness. What Wendt calls the "grand inner unity," the "unswerving consistency," in contrast, for example, with that of Augustine and Luther, the "purely religious" and the perfectly "moral" nature of the teaching of Jesus and its complete representation in his own spirit are undeniable. From the position, not of discipleship, but of the scholar, Wendt adds that when viewed as a great system of thought the teaching of Jesus "is on a par with the most complete philosophical and religious systems of thought which have been founded by men."[1] This reminds one of John Stuart Mill's famous judgment about

[1] Wendt, vol. ii. p. 393.

Jesus: "But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast."[1] These judgments about Jesus fall far short of the judgment of faith concerning him. Still it would be well for theology not to forget what Mill calls the "preëminent genius" of Jesus. If theology is discourse about God and divine things, the teaching of the sovereign preacher is the sovereign theology.

Many books have been written on the theology of Paul. His teaching is worthy of the devotion that it has received from scholars. Its strength lies in the fact that it is a discovery of the meaning of human experience apart from Christ and as his happy disciple. The moral idea was from youth the sovereign reality in Paul's life. Judaism stood condemned because there was nothing in it to lift Paul into peace with his ideal. Christianity was the final religion. Jesus was the Lord of men, because in Jesus and in his teaching Paul found strength, wings rather, to

[1] *Essays on Religion*, p. 234.

fly in the fiery path of his ideal, as in the glow of the retreating sun. Paul's theology is the theology of an educated mind; it is the issue of profound and passionate thinking; and in his letters it receives anything but careless expression. Still the theology of this apostle is the theology of a preacher. Its origin in experience, its attempt to set forth the meaning of experience, human and Christian, its purpose as the servant of life, the freedom and simplicity of its method, its essence as religion filled with insight, penetrated with thought, consubstantiated with reason, attest its source. It is the theology of one of the greatest preachers. If one shall consider method, and method alone, there could hardly be a greater blunder than the judgment that described the author of the Fourth Gospel as the theologian. But if we consider him a theologian who in a large and noble way views all life in the light of the Eternal, then surely the writer who dates the career of Jesus from the mind of God, who recites the leading events of his ministry as of unique significance as manifestations of God, and who in thus regarding the history of Jesus gathers up into it the history of mankind, must be looked upon as the typical theologian. The conclusion reached from a survey of the Old Testament and of the New is that if there is in these sacred books anything

deserving to be called theology, that theology is undeniably the theology of preachers.

It is not without interest to observe that whether for good or evil the dominating minds in the theology of the church, with a few notable exceptions, have been the minds of preachers. It would be absurd to say that all great preachers have been theologians. It would not be wide of the mark to say that by far the larger number of the great historic theologians have been preachers. Clement, and especially Origen, are professional scholars and thinkers; Athanasius was a thinker and an administrator. It may be said that the fundamental excellence of Greek theology is owing in some measure to the fact that it was elaborated by competent scholars and trained thinkers. It may be further contended that if Augustine had been more of a scholar and less of a preacher his theology would have been of a higher type. Augustine was a preacher, and his theology had the great merit of being a generalization from experience. Augustine was a typical nature. He represented in his experience the dominating notes in the experience of Europe for more than a thousand years. Here is the source of the vast vitality of his theology. He stood near to men in their distress and in their hope. His faults are owing less to want of scholarship, and much more to the abnormal

excesses and sorrows of the human experience from which he generalized. His method is on the whole sound, and the instinct that guides Augustine the theologian is the feeling of Augustine the preacher.

Among the reformers Melancthon is the pure scholar, and his vocation is one of light, if not always one of peace. Luther is many things, but in them all he is supremely the preacher. Calvin is a scholar and professional thinker; yet in the "Institutes" it is impossible not to feel the passion of the preacher. Zwingli is a man of action, and his share in the social concerns of his people and in their political struggles tells for good upon his attitude as a theologian. In England the leading minds in theology from Wiclif to Maurice have been the minds of preachers. Scotland has never had a professional theologian in the sense in which she has had professional philosophers. This is not said to her credit; for the absence of the pure thinker is a grievous limitation. Such theologians as she has had have been of the preacher type,—Samuel Rutherford, Thomas Chalmers, Thomas Erskine, McLeod Campbell.

In New England, the nursing mother of great theologians, the same type has been the prevailing type. The founder of New England divinity was a man bred to the vocation of the preacher.

Again the influence of the preacher is seen in the best work of the theologian. In his great work on "Religious Affections" Edwards is exploring the experimental sources of theology to which he had been led as a preacher. It should be noted that our American theology originated in the mind of one of our preachers. Hopkins, Emmons, Channing, Parker, Bushnell, and many influential thinkers of lower rank than those named, were non-professional theologians. Nathaniel Taylor and Edwards A. Park are among the first of our New England professional theologians. They did very great service to the cause of Christian faith, and they have been followed by worthy successors. Yet even in the two great teachers just named the preacher never died; even in the most technical and elaborate of our divines the influence of the preacher's calling was potent and lasting.

Two men, both preachers, have had a very wide influence on theology in this country. Channing was a preacher, and his doctrine of man, his anthropology, has had through his teaching and through the men whom he inspired an immense influence. It has been a precious influence. It has held on its way because it was truth, and because no weapon formed against it has been able to prosper. Channing's doctrine of man, his prevailing teaching about

man, is the teaching of Jesus; to Channing more than to any other single influence we are indebted for the revival of the New Testament interpretation of human nature. And on the same level as a popular theologian must be placed Henry Ward Beecher. He did more than any other teacher to break up and abolish the Calvinistic Moloch. He pled for the Infinite Father of mankind when all the seminaries of the land, with their prestige, their learning, their opportunity and power, were putting first God the Sovereign, God the Moral Governor of the world. It was an immense battle, like that of David and a host of Goliaths. Men in middle life will recall the opinion industriously disseminated, that Beecher was no theologian. It was said that the great preacher was neither a scholar nor a consistent thinker. The indictment drawn by a whole generation of scholars and teachers seemed strong enough to send the great commoner into speedy and everlasting oblivion. Contrary to all expectation the professionals failed. As in the case of the shepherd lad in the day of battle, the simple apparatus of the preacher, the sling and the five smooth stones from the brook, the insight and passion and eloquence of Beecher the great pulpit humanist of his time, backed by the sympathy of the Lord of Hosts, prevailed. Greater influence

upon the religious belief of the people of the United States has been exerted by none than by William Ellery Channing and Henry Ward Beecher. Both are examples of the good work which the non-professional theologian may do for his generation.

IV

Whatever doubts may exist concerning the preacher as a source of theological ideas, there can be no doubt that his calling gives him an unequaled opportunity for testing theological ideas. Under the process of genuine preaching there sometimes issues a scheme within the scheme of general belief. Dr. Chalmers of Scotland was for many years a teacher of the Calvinistic divinity. Yet as a great preacher there was generated within him a vital faith to which his theology could not do justice. The passage of poetry which was oftenest upon his lips is the utterance, not of Chalmers the theologian, but of Chalmers the preacher: —

> "The man
> That could surround the sum of things, and spy
> The heart of God and secrets of his empire
> Would speak but love. With love the bright result
> Would change the hue of intermediate things,
> And make one of all theology."[1]

The contradiction of the general traditional

[1] Hanna, *Life of Chalmers*, vol. iii. p. 206.

scheme of divinity has been inevitable under the process of large and loving service to men. Preachers who have continued to rank themselves in the school of Calvin have done so with an increasing accumulation of mental reservations. The divine thing was the gospel of Christ, their sense of its infinitude, their service in its power to the permanent and noble need of men. The authority of the traditional divinity became secondary to that of the law of the spirit of life in Christ. Toward the end of life, in the case of many eminent preachers, it became a deposed authority. The scheme was overwhelmed in the presence of the fact of which it professed to be the account. The intellectual element in faith sank into insignificance when compared with the rich and vast possession of the heart. This quiet surrender to silence of bodies of divinity found incommensurate with the light and the love generated in the heart of the preacher is a large and a significant phenomenon.

In a vast number the contradiction between the ideals and the best life of the spirit and the traditional divinity led to a revolt from all theology. The time had not come for a new philosophy of the Christian life and faith. Meanwhile the accepted system of belief was found worthless, and the preachers of whom I am now thinking abandoned theology for literature.

They read the Bible as the literature of the spirit; they read the great literatures of the race. They found in this field a world of noble ideas. These ideas were fresh from the heart of humanity, and they stood expressed in monumental power. The "Odyssey" was preferred to the "Institutes" of Calvin or the "Systematic Theology" of Hodge; the crimes of a wanton and fascinating goddess as set forth by the poet were less revolting than the awful disregard of his creatures ascribed to the Creator by the theologian; while in the bald and questionable propositions of the traditional divinity there was nothing to match the sweet and stainless humanity of a Nausicaä, or the invincible loyalty of a Penelope, or the high domestic honor of an Odysseus. Here was a chance to see the pathos and the grandeur of man. A glorious creature like the Antigone of Sophocles had, for this class of preachers, more true theology in her being, and more of the essential truth about human nature, than the entire extant divinity of the church. There was, doubtless, a good deal of exaggeration in the mental estimates of these rebel preachers. They stand, nevertheless, for a wholesome movement. They were unable to accept the old scheme, and they were unable to construct a new and a better scheme; they abandoned, therefore, all schemes; they went

straight to life, and to life's great and free expression in literature.

Under the process of genuine preaching there has resulted a vast purification of the scheme of belief. There have been in the ministry men who could not work with a contradiction in their heart, and who could not give up the hope of a philosophy of the religious life. These men have driven out false doctrine by the power of life. Election, not in the sense of the choice of the eminent person as the servant of all, like Moses for Israel, like Jesus for mankind, but election as the selection of some and the rejection of others, seemed to the preachers now referred to, an incredible belief. All the texts in the Bible could not prove this doctrine compatible with Infinite justice against the verdict of the human conscience. They felt that this was an immoral doctrine. It must be distinctly rejected as unpreachable and incredible. It was unpreachable for many reasons, but for this one reason above all others, that whenever a doctrine forces itself upon man against the clear protest of his conscience, that doctrine is worse than useless. To continue to teach it is to endeavor to break down the moral nature of man, and ultimately to make faith in the moral character of God impossible. The doctrine is incredible because it professes to embody the

disposition toward man of the Eternal justice. It has been abolished by the preacher.

The doctrine of human depravity has gone in the same way. The doctrine was unjust to life as a whole. There are men, no doubt, who illustrate that doctrine with appalling fullness and success. Wickedness is one of the intense and awful facts of human history. Selfishness is one of the persistent and terrible forces in human society. But an indictment justified by exceptional cases must not be drawn against mankind. Nor can we justly present as a full account of human nature the base side only. The image of God remains uneffaced even in the basest human existence, and in the most exalted career there is the constant pressure of the animal. There is no such hard and fast distinction in life between the converted and the unconverted as exists in the traditional theology. Here is the imperfect life bravely pursuing a glorious ideal; there is the far more imperfect life that is practically without a moral ideal. This nature is not depraved. It is full of weakness, and at the same time it is full of instinctive worth. And this description holds over the larger number of human beings. The image of God is in partnership with the brute in all, and the great question is as to which of the two is the head of the firm. A doctrine of man

generalized from exceptional instances of human baseness; supported by the animal in man and ignoring the divine in man; ignoring, too, the indissoluble connection, given in the image of God in the soul, between the Eternal Father and his children in time, has been eliminated from the preacher's scheme because it was found untrue to the facts.

The doctrine of the atonement has undergone transformation at the hands of preachers. The simple basis of peace between the Infinite conscience and the dark and sinful conscience of man is revealed once for all, with noonday clearness, in the teaching of Jesus. That ground of peace is the love of God, of whom Jesus in his life and in his death is the sovereign assurance. The career of Jesus, the death of Jesus, is sacrificial because it is ruled by love; and this career consummated in death reveals the Father who makes it possible, who lives in it, who finds in it the perfect human expression of the eternal sacrifice in his nature. This atonement through love, this reconciliation by the almightiness of character, the character of God revealed in the character of Jesus, this proclamation of peace in the name and in the strength of the moral universe, and the eternal Personal tenderness in which the moral universe is centred, is true to the heart of the gospel, and it is true to the heart of human

life. It is an atonement in fundamental reality, and it is one of infinite moral sublimity.

This simple law of peace and hope in Christ Jesus was viewed in a priestly manner by the apostles. There was no other way of getting its meaning into the mind of a people in bondage to the temple and the priesthood. There was no other way of interpreting it to the nations with whom sacrifice was a constant element in religion. The altar imagery was the most effective for the apostolic audience. And no one can read critically apostolic literature without feeling the danger besetting this idiom of the priest, without observing the constant effort to cancel this danger. The great letter to the Hebrews is the strongest illustration of both points. It employs in the largest way the priestly terms and customs for the interpretation of Christ and his gospel. It supersedes the whole tradition and custom of the priest in the endless spiritual priesthood of Christ. In reading this great composition one sees that the writer uses the idiom of the priest as a convenient symbol and no more; just as Spenser in his "Faërie Queene" uses the world of chivalry as a symbol for his moral ideals. For Paul, John, and the author of Hebrews, the priestly practice of Hebraism is a symbol of the power and process of the Eternal Spirit in Jesus, — a symbol, nothing more.

It became a doctrine for the church, and it has assumed in the course of history a variety of forms, each a little less objectionable than its predecessor. The death of Christ came to be regarded as a debt paid to Satan for the recovery of mankind. In consequence of Adam's fall, involving as it did mankind, Satan acquired possession of the race. The race could be delivered only by an offering to Satan; that offering was the death of Christ. This curious conception is evidently the product, not of the enlightenment, but of the superstition of the age. It could not remain; it must pass away. Then came the Anselmic conception, the conception of sin as an infinite affront to God, an affront which could be atoned for only by the death of an Infinite being of perfect holiness. For this purpose God became man. This conception, which lifted into infinite relations the whole temporal existence of man, and which put upon the career of Jesus an interpretation so sublime, took deep hold upon the imagination. And yet it could not always prevail. It made human weakness responsible for infinite guilt; it arraigned the character of God in thus regarding man; and it placed its confidence in an artificial scheme of reconciliation, and not in the fundamental order of justice and love. As the moral consciousness grew in simplicity and strength, the Anselmic conception

passed away. Then came, among other ideas, the governmental theory of reconciliation. God is a lawgiver. Man as sinner has insulted the majesty of the law. He cannot be forgiven until satisfaction has been made to the injured majesty of moral law. Christ alone could make this satisfaction, and his death is this satisfaction. This view has played a large part in the religious life of New England since the days of the younger Edwards. It is one of the least real, least credible, of the various conceptions of atonement. It has little relation to the moral experience of man; it is a doctrine developed from analogy. It makes the enormous assumption that civil law and civil administration are the analogies of the divine law, the divine administration. It was elaborated with great fullness and ingenuity; it was defended by expert logicians. But it could not last. It was of no use except in pathological cases; it was an essentially unpreachable doctrine. The profound moral experience of Bushnell, his genius for the soul of Christianity, and his obedience to the heavenly vision at first checked the sway of the governmental view, then drove it back upon its scholastic strongholds, and finally shut it up there to starve to death. Bushnell the preacher, and the host of preachers whom he has inspired, have given another great example of the purification

of doctrine under the process of genuine preaching.

The doctrine of retribution is of infinite moment to faith because it is of infinite moment to life. That doctrine has been content to wear for more than fifteen centuries the form of an Inferno. This reign of terror is approaching its end, and still it is true that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. The conception of retribution purified in the Christian conscience is alive with awful and elemental power. It is the work of this generation of preachers to show the punitive process of God in the moral life of man, to show that hope for man is sound because God is a punitive process in the courses of human existence, that optimism builds its foundations upon the prevailing strength of the motives to goodness which God is generating in the tormented humanity of sinful souls. It is for this generation of preachers to scorn the poor refuge of annihilation in their flight from an eternal hell, and to ground their message to man in the relentless rigor and redeeming strength of the conscience of God in the history of the world.

In addition to this process of doctrinal purification under the genuine preacher, there is the yet vaster process of verification conducted by preachers. There was a time when science was learned from books. That time is gone. To-

day science is taught in the fields of nature; scientific theories are brought to the test of the living process of nature. The biological, the chemical, the physical, the physiological, the psychological conceptions that are to remain as valid must find verification in the order of nature. Science is the progressive refutation of one set of conceptions, the progressive verification and the final demonstration of another set of conceptions. The scientific process is gradually clearing the human mind of fictions concerning nature. It is steadily adding to the sum of attested truths. We go to life with our scheme of belief. Our scheme of belief is for the sake of life. It is purified and exalted as a philosophy under the influence of life; and as a provisionally adequate scheme it seeks verification in the life of men and nations. It is a faith while it waits for complete attestation. It is an assumption while it is wanting in full verification. It is an order of conceptions while untranslated into the process of living, while unaccepted and unapproved by that process. The preacher superintends this vast field of interest. His vocation is to press the faith to complete attestation, to urge the assumption into full verification, to conduct an order of ideas into the process of living, and to show this order of ideas thus accepted and approved as the eternal

truth. Professor James says in his richly rewarding and yet somewhat disappointing "Varieties of Religious Experience": "I do not see why a critical Science of Religions of this sort might not eventually command as general a public adhesion as is commanded by physical science. Even the personally non-religious might accept its conclusions on trust, much as blind persons now accept the facts of optics — it might appear as foolish to refuse them. Yet as the science of optics has to be fed in the first instance, and continually verified later, by facts experienced by seeing persons, so the science of religions would depend for its original material on facts of personal experience, and would have to square itself with personal experiences through all its critical reconstructions. It could never get away from concrete life, or work in a conceptual vacuum."[1] These words express exactly the vocation of the preacher. He is testing ideas in the living process and laying to heart the result. He brings to the field of existence an order of ideas, and he watches the verdict of fidelity to these ideas in the conduct of life. It is the vision of this process and the observation of its results that give the preacher confidence in the truth of his philosophy of human existence, that make him regret the meagre issues to which Professor James leads in a book abounding in

[1] P. 456.

rare insight and paragraphs of classic fidelity to the life of the religious man. We may hope for an order of ideas concerning religion as the result of the study of religious experience; so far we thank Professor James, and we agree with him. We take the ideas that have risen out of the supreme religious experience, the ideas of Jesus as delivered to him by his experience; and we may hope that these ideas may find full verification in the increasing and ascending experience of man. All experience is not of equal value even in religion; Professor James is too broad. The ideal religious experience sets free the latent capacity of the average man. Working upon him and upon his fellows, we may hope for the verdict of life in behalf of the great ideas of faith. We come to life with a faith; we may receive from it vision.

V

A better definition of the function of the preacher could hardly be given than that contained in the phrase of Matthew Arnold, "the application of noble ideas to life." The sphere in which the preacher should move is at the intersection of ideas and life. In this view of the function of preaching, the vocation is an inclusive one. I have met few able and earnest men who were not preachers according to this definition. Preachers abound in science, in art, in

literature, in economics, in political and in philosophical subjects in our time because it is a time of faith and moral earnestness. The vocation of the preacher is honored to-day in a manner unusual, and to an extent unknown to other generations. The belief is nearly universal among us that human life is amenable to ideas, that in the government of life by noble ideas is the only hope of mankind. No contempt for the preacher of the gospel as a mere exhorter should discourage him when he sees his vocation fast becoming the vocation of the scholar, when he looks upon the distinction with which it is crowned.

If the function of the preacher be the application of noble ideas to life, need he be wholly confined to the application? Should there not be a study of life in order to ascertain its needs? Should there not be a comparison of ideas in order to discover which are the noble ones? Doubtless the peculiar gift of the genuine preacher is in fitting truth to life, and not in adjusting idea to idea. This, however, does not exhaust his calling. The preacher should seek not only for ideas, but also for a comprehensive order of ideas, for a theology. His interest in ideas because of their bearing on life should help him as a thinker, as an explorer among ideas, as a purifier and an adjuster of ideas. The navigator is not an astronomer; his first concern is to

sail by the heavens, not to make a map of them; yet the interest which the navigator takes in the stars can be no barrier in the way toward sharing in the vision of the astronomer. The ideas that gather about life to serve it, that plead for and secure the sovereignty of the good will, that keep men strong and pure and tender in the great process of existence, gain in power thereby over the mind of the student. If one could go deep enough, one would discover that the interest of the remotest reach of the intellect is a human interest. The real things, τὰ ὄντα, of the metaphysician are as full of humanity to him as the foundations of the house that he is about to build are to the lover. Behind the pale tables and blank names of the genealogist is a warm and tender and beautiful human world upon which his eye rests with delight. Human interest is the source of all good thinking; the more there is of it in the preacher, other things being equal, the deeper he will be as a thinker. Since ideas are a necessity, a limited necessity perhaps, to the genuine preacher, it would seem that he must possess some kind of a theology. And the higher the work of intelligence in his calling, the profounder and more coherent will be the order of ideas by which he ministers at the altar of human need. The preacher may well feel it incumbent upon him to assist in the emergence

from the richer Christian life of to-day of an ampler, nobler, and more coherent order of ideas. Let him, where he can, contribute something toward the appreciation of the faith that saves man. Let him not put this duty wholly upon the professional scholar. The expert is here to stay. The worlds of opportunity are more and more rolling into view. History in the largest sense of the word is the sphere of ideal revelations. The equipment of the scholar, his leisure, judgment, patience, and authority are indispensable to progress. No one but the expert can do the work of the expert. Once for all that is settled. Further, the pure thinker is one sent from God; as the hue of the sky is on the sea, so whether we would or would not have it so, the cast of thought of thinkers like Aristotle, Kant, and Hegel is on the mind of educated men the world over. The task of human progress calls for a vast multitude and a vast variety of servants. The work of religious progress calls for a great company of workmen each trained to do some one thing well.

This is the truth, yet I am persuaded that it is not the whole truth. The sphere of the preacher is the sphere of the theologian. Where there is the requisite intellectual power the vocation of the preacher will, as in other times, express itself in an order of ideas. It should not

be forgotten that the best ethical work in the English language is a volume of sermons. Butler was a preacher; he knew human nature; he knew the leading ideas of the gospel; he knew well how to adjust the ideas to the life. It was this insight and equipment that enabled him to write a book on ethics of permanent and priceless value. The man whose daily task puts him where he must see the outgoings of morning and evening may not be a poet; it cannot be denied that his calling includes the opportunity of the poet. The man whose vocation bids him look through the vision of Jesus upon birth and death, childhood and youth, work and rest, trial and victory, love and marriage, joy and sorrow, hope and fear, the fierce egoism that would desolate the world and the self-surrender that carries into humanity the sense of God, the demand of the individual conscience for a pure heart, the demand of the social conscience for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, — above all, the man whose vocation bids him look with the eyes of Christ upon souls carried away by the Spirit, stands on hallowed ground. Here, if anywhere, great ideas come into view; here a comprehensive order of ideas arises to reward vision; here may be seen in its grand outlines the theology that will prevail in the city of God.

CHAPTER II

THE QUEST FOR A THEOLOGY

I

It was the remark of an eastern Massachusetts farmer that religion and theology are not the same thing by a great deal. The ministerial tradition, which dates from the excellent Unitarian preacher Dr. Putnam, is that the farmer's remark was still more emphatic, too emphatic altogether for literal quotation. This distinction between religion and theology is important and should never be overlooked. While the difference between these two interests may be unduly emphasized, less harm is likely to come from the exaggeration of the contrasts which they present than from the sheer identification of the interests themselves. The identification of the incarnation with the philosophy of it, of the atonement with the governmental theory of it, of the process of the spiritual life and the Calvinistic or Arminian account of it, is no new thing in the history of the church. Dogma and faith are alike and equally the work of man and the work of God, and yet the sheer identification of them

has been a blunder and a calamity. Confusion between the mood of the spirit and the work of the intellect has resulted; to those hungering for bread a stone has thus been offered; and when religion and a given interpretation of it have become identical, persecution with sword in hand has gone forth on her fanatical and bloody mission. The canonization of anything but the Infinite is a mistake. To fix the standards of truth and of goodness in any utterance save the utterance of God in Christ, in any character save the character of God in Christ, is of the nature of an outrage upon humanity. There is no standard of truth or of goodness short of the Infinite truth and goodness to which Jesus Christ conducts men. But of all mistakes the canonization of a given theology is the most fatal. It is to hold that it is the only intellectual form of the life of the spirit; it is to identify the highest in man with a particular phase of mental development. It is to identify navigation and astronomic theories. It is to regard as one ocean tides and scientific explanations of them. The one phenomenon is elemental, irresistible, and it goes in the power of the universe; the other has indeed discerning eyes, but it is slow-paced and uncertain. Religion is the original human necessity; theology is but a derivative and limited necessity.

Religion is essential to man; it is his mood and bearing toward the universe, the spirit in which he regards human society, the attitude of his heart toward God. Theology, while valuable to all, is essential only to the teacher of religion. The teacher of religion is the producer of religion, and he finds that he is stronger as a producer when he is intelligent and sincere as a student of the science of religion. The farmer is a producer of wealth, and he is at his best as a producer when he works in the light of a true political economy. Religion is primarily feeling; intellect is in it only in an instinctive way, and it comes to action at first by its own pure impulse. Edwards shows his careful insight in his doctrine that "true religion, in great part, consists in holy affections." The affections are indeed penetrated with instinctive reason, and will is always in supreme desire. "Whom not having seen ye love." The picture of the unseen Christ is in the love, and the love flows out in the stream of heroic life, unchecked even by "manifold temptations." Still religion is best described as feeling over against theology as an expression of the meaning of this feeling. Theology inquires after the source of this high experience, its character, its assurance, its worth. Religion may be viewed as life, and theology as the expression of this life in fundamental ideas

set in their true order. Religion is thus the primary and universal interest; theology is secondary and limited. Religion is material; theology is form. Religion is master; theology is servant. And for this reason whoever wishes to be an effective minister of religion should strive to compass a clear and commanding theology.

Practical interests breed the sciences. They are organized and carried forward by chosen persons for the sake of the interests that are practical, universal, and imperative. Political economy results from the necessity man is under to create wealth; it is an attempt at an interpretation of the economic situation; it is an instance of the understanding working in the interest of practical ends. The science of ethics has risen out of the endeavor on the part of man to render his life reasonable. It is the expression of a great human interest, and it is the permanent servant of that interest. Chemistry, physics, biology, physiology, psychology, represent the interests of living men served through the scientific intellect. A science with no conceivable relation to human welfare, in the largest sense of that term, is a piece of altruism for which no sane man should be competent. The science of astronomy has obvious practical relations, as in navigation; but beyond these, and in its most abstract form, it is the expression of the intelli-

gence without which human life would be worthless. In its utmost reach of remoteness from the affairs of men it is still the high expression and the noble servant of an essential human interest. Even if one shall take a humorous view of the intellectual effort of the race, one must still confess its essentialness. Even if one shall regard the successive dynasties of science and art and philosophy as like the soap bubbles which the children blow and with which they amuse themselves, still these brilliant and unsubstantial creations must be admitted to be expressions and servants of a genuine human impulse. They are the signs of life and humor, they are the tokens of growth and joy. Thus, upon any view of their value, even the lowest, the theoretic interests of man rise out of his living, practical interests and they return upon them. These scientific pursuits are related to the business of living as the exhalations from the sea are to the fruitful earth. Mists rise out of the deep, gather into great clouds laden with blessing, and this blessing is poured from the open windows of heaven back upon the earth from which it came. No one science can be named whose vital interest is independent of the business of living. Withdraw the practical world, and the theoretic world would die; cancel the theoretic world, and the practical world would lapse into the original

darkness. The university is one great symbol of the union of these two interests. The university represents the intelligence of the world organized round the great living interests of man. Science is inseparable from applied science, culture from applied culture, knowledge from knowledge in the service of society. The old division of learning into the sciences and the humanities is wholly artificial. The studies of biology, anatomy, and physiology, which go to fit the physician for his profession, deserve the name of humanity no less than the studies in language, history, and literature, which qualify the writer for his vocation. The task of the university is to discover the permanent interests of man, and to organize the intellect of the world for the promotion of the whole circle of these interests.

Here is the true description for the character and vocation of theology. It is intellect in the service of the heart; it is Christian intellect organized for the promotion of the Christian life. Theology bears the same relation to the soul that science does to farming, mining, manufacture, navigation, sanitation, hygiene, the treatment of the body, the construction of public works, the general promotion of the interests of civilized man. Theology, like science, stands for knowledge whose whole value is in its use. A priori science and a priori theology are alike and

equally absurd. True science and sound theology have an experiential basis. Neither can create anything; each is dependent for material upon the generative power of life. The external world is a world in the senses; it is a world to be understood through the senses; it is primarily a world in one side of human life. Science comes with her torch and her high inventions and her laborious hours to enable life to seize its great inheritance, to understand and to turn to use the world that lies in its heart. The object of science is given; it is to be understood; it is to be understood that it may be enjoyed. And back to the world given in sense science must bring her work for judgment. There is only one sure way of getting rid of false science, and that is by subjecting it to the test of fact. There is only one sure way of vindicating true science, and that is by showing its complete comformity to fact. This is part of the axiom that the validity of thought is everywhere to be tested by life. Thought may become widely generalized, highly abstract; that is, the point of resemblance among things over a vast expanse of being seized by the mind may be but a thread in the mighty fabric of existence, may look like a brook in the valley seen from an Alpine peak. This fine aspect of existence may be isolated, for the purposes of thought, from its

great context of reality, may be compared or contrasted with other aspects, and a whole body of ideas may be deduced from this comparison or contrast. Color may be treated apart from the colored object, shades of color may be singled out of the general mass of color, other finer tints still may engage the mind, and these may be brought into comparison and contrast among themselves, and a body of ideas come into existence exceedingly remote from the world that lies in the sunlight. This is an inevitable procedure in all science and in all thought. The point made, however, is that this world of general ideas must come back to the world of fact for judgment. It is a world of fancy and not of truth unless it is in conformity to the world of fact.

Nowhere should this procedure be more strictly applied than in theology. It should be made clear that the Christian life is the source of Christian theology. There is the fountain of its material. There is the world that it is to understand and explain. God and the moral universe are for the soul; and theology is here as guide, interpreter, passionate lover, and wise servant. Theology becomes highly general, highly abstract; its ideas are aspects of life as a whole; and these aspects of life as a whole, when compared and contrasted among themselves, give

rise to other still remoter views of existence. And sometimes theology takes wings and flies away from the real world altogether. Then it should be discredited, or treated as a work of imagination. Genuine theology will always be known through the test of fact. Bring all the theologies face to face with the deep and devout Christian heart; confront them with the heart of Christ. In so far as they conform to that test they are true; in so far as they fail they are not true. The best protection against false science is a good command of the facts which it professes to treat; the surest defense against bad theology is a great vital Christian experience. Aristotle thought that young men were poor students of ethics because they were deficient in the experience out of which the science of ethics rises; and it is certain that without profound Christian experience theology will be an unreal and dismal structure. The quest for a theology throws one back with tremendous emphasis upon the grand primacy of life. That once established, the vocation of theology is clear; that once established, the necessity of theology for the minister to the soul is evident.

II

Until within the last five-and-twenty years theologies were ready-made, waiting to be under-

stood and appropriated. Two competing theologies were on hand, the Calvinistic in several varieties, and the Arminian. The function of the theological student was generally one of mere scholarship; it was, with now and then a notable exception, to learn, to understand, to choose between rival schools, to appropriate and use. The panoply of Calvin reduced in size was kept on hand for the young fighter for righteousness; and it was not difficult to obtain the armor of Arminius similarly made over. Here and there a David was found who rejected this theological armor, and who went forth against the enemy with the five smooth stones from the river of God and the sling; who took his religion and did his valiant deeds wholly in the name of the Lord of Hosts. This was, however, the exception; it was the daring method of genius sure of its purpose and its divining skill. Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as a rule, the quest for a theology was not a difficult one. As I have said, the student had but to understand, adopt, and employ the past thinking of the church.

It is intensely interesting to watch the church emerging from the mists of the first third of the second century without a theology. How sorely beset the brave apologists were as they found the new religion with its glorious life coming

into contact both sympathetic and hostile with the old world and its intellectual habits and possessions. The time had come, not simply for the utterance of a common faith or for the appeal to conscience, but for the large use of reason in religion. The time had gone when the sufficient medium of Christian utterance was sympathy, when the poetic method of symbol or the throwing out of words at their great objects was adequate. The preacher could no longer depend upon the hearer for sympathetic insight, still less for receptivity. The time had arrived for definition, for telling the meaning of the new faith in an order of ideas. What has the new faith to say about the universe, concerning its Founder, in reference to the origin of the world, respecting its sacred books, regarding the goal of history and the age to come? A world of educated Greeks and Romans, swayed by definite conceptions of the universe, or controlled by a profound skepticism, was the environment in which theology became a necessity. The communities in which Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism were the intellectual possession made it impossible that the office of the preacher who had no theology should be a bed of roses. Sufficient honor is rarely felt for the apologists. They were the men who made a beginning; and their task was like creation.

They had to make a theological world out of nothing. Materials there were, elements pre-existed in abundance; but the design of a reasoned expression of the new faith for the new time was originated by the apologists. You can see them — Aristides, Justin, Fabian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, the satirical Hermias, the vehement Mencius — standing in the mist of that early morning and working bravely and well for the Eternal gospel that they loved. There should be immense sympathy between those apologists and students of theology to-day. They found nothing ready-made that could serve their need; and that is the crisis upon which we have come. They stood with four great rival systems of philosophy confronting them as disciples and defenders of the new religion; and to-day the preacher delivers his message in an environment similarly charged with forces both kindred and alien. They appear in the mists of a new day, busy with beginnings in the bewildering fogs of the dawning epoch, flitting about like shadows in their morning time of cloud and sun. If we shall appear to as good advantage eighteen centuries hence, in the dim twilight in which we are working with so little comprehension of the new epoch and so great hopes, we may well be thankful. As we see Justin take the great Stoic thought of the λόγος,

the Divine reason immanent in the universe, immanent in man, the thought that accounts for the intelligibleness of the universe and the intelligence of man; as we see Justin take this insight of the highest minds of his age and declare that that Divine reason became incarnate in Jesus Christ, we may well aspire to make as wise and as fruitful a use of philosophic ideas for the service of our faith as he did for his faith.

In Clement and Origen we witness great creative activity. In a less, and still in a remarkable degree, the creative mood is present in Athanasius and the Gregories. What we have to note here is the necessity for a theology that works through these wonderful men. In the West a parallel necessity is seen working in Tertullian, and yet more in Augustine. Man is the subject of the new religion, and he needs to be understood in his nature and history. The demand for an anthropology is as imperative as the call for a theology. The romance lying in those old thinkers, the poetry hidden under their outgrown discussions, is discovered when one thinks of their work as a vast and joyous response to the divine necessity of the time. They stand for an infinite spiritual possession beset with the gravest peril, calling for intellectual forms suitable to the age, forms

of preservation for the Christian faith and forms of power for it. They stand for an immense creative movement in theology. And because of the creative spirit that is in them these theologies will always have life. They are related to theology to-day as Plato and Aristotle are related to philosophy. The great Greek thinkers are in part still classic. In his disclosure of the importance of general ideas in the Socratic Dialogues Plato is still unequaled; in his treatment of the dignity of the soul in the "Phædo," the "Phædrus," and the "Republic" he remains unsurpassed; in his idea of the Good as related to the invisible and rational world as the sun is to the visible he continues an inspiring teacher; while in his conception of the ideal society there is much to instruct the preacher of the kingdom of God. In his definition and exposition of syllogistic reasoning Aristotle is yet master; in his wavering account of reality as existing in the union of the individual and the universal he touches this age at a vital point; in his treatment of the family, in his idea of friendship, in his entire ethical and political philosophy, he is strong enough to incite a beneficent revolution. And his conception that the material for all science and all philosophy is furnished from experience, from the living soul in a living social order, is a lesson of immense moment

for thinkers, and especially for theologians, to-day. These two Greek philosophers are here and there still classic; in larger sections they remain the world's teachers; and in the grandeur of their creative movement they continue to inspire the organism of thought which as a whole has gone beyond them. Not quite so much can be said of these theologians of the third and fourth and fifth centuries, and yet something like this may be said of them. Here and there they say things with surpassing wisdom; for example, Clement's teaching on the education of mankind, Origen's movement backward from Jesus Christ into the Godhead, the Nicene Creed as an expression of faith, Augustine on the relation of faith to knowledge, that is, experience to theology, and on love. In a larger way these theologians are still an enriching study; but best of all, while in contact with them one feels in company with first-hand thinkers, creative minds, struggling with unequal conditions to put their spiritual possession into adequate and commanding intellectual form.

From the fifth century to the Reformation the creative spirit vanishes from theology. Even then what we witness is a theological revival and not a new creation. Luther and Calvin are expositors of Augustinianism. New ideas are in society, but they are crushed by John Calvin

into the old categories. The originality of Edwards lies outside of his system. It is to be found in his essays on "The Will," "The True Nature of Virtue," "The Ultimate End in Creation," and "Religious Affections." There is in Edwards no radical reorganization of theology; there is, however, the basis of it. His one great idea is the absoluteness of God. It is God for whom Edwards stands from first to last, and his conception of God is the promise of a new world in theology. When Edwards's thought of the absolute moral perfection of God shall obtain careful, fearless, and consistent expression, a new day will dawn upon theology. MacLeod Campbell broke away from traditional opinion at one point, — the value of the cross as an expression of God's love for mankind. At this point Horace Bushnell broke away, and through his impatience with formal theology and his spiritual genius it is easy to exaggerate the measure in which he abandoned the traditional position. He was the inaugurator of a movement greater than he knew, and he was full of impulses the significance of which even he did not understand. There was in him the old creative spirit, with the literary method as opposed to the formal, and his break with the past at one supreme point — atonement — and at two or three subordinate points was a prophecy of the coming inevitable reorganization

of theology. Still this conception is hardly in him; and it is certain that he did not use it. Until the final third of the nineteenth century I can find no thinker, except F. D. Maurice, whose mind is creative over the whole domain of dogmatic belief. The mention of Maurice recalls the fact that concerning no other eminent name in the nineteenth century is there so wide a difference of opinion. In 1856 Dr. Martineau writes of Maurice: "We do not deny that his meaning is at times difficult to reach; for it is apt to be delayed too long by his scrupulous candor of concession, his modest shrinking from self-assertion, his preference of the sympathetic to the distinctive attitude. But we venture with some confidence to assert that for consistency and completeness of thought, and precision in the use of language, it would be difficult to find his superior among living theologians." [1] Upon this Martineau's friend F. W. Newman responds: "As to Maurice I am sure that you understand him, and on your testimony I believe there is in him a noble and self-consistent religious theory; but that will not enable me to suspect that it is my fault and not his that I find him obscure." [2] Mr. Leslie Stephen thinks that the reason why Green the historian broke away from the influ-

[1] *Essays*, vol. i. p. 258.

[2] *Life and Letters of Dr. Martineau*, vol. i. pp. 288, 289.

ence of Maurice was Maurice's lack of clear-headedness. In another connection Mr. Stephen says: "Though Maurice was far from clear-headed, I fully believe that his liberal and humane spirit was of the greatest value, and that he did more than most men to raise the social tone in regard to the greatest problems."[1] Froude comments upon what he is pleased to call Maurice's "strange obliquity of intellect which could think that black was white, and white because it was black, and the whiter always, the blacker the shade."[2] The curious stupidity of Froude's judgment finds a parallel in the noble condescension with which a very slender writer sums up his opinion on Maurice: "A very generous and amiable person with a deficient sense of history, Maurice in his writing is a sort of elder, less gifted, and more exclusively theological Charles Kingsley, on whom he exercised great and rather unfortunate influence. But his looseness of thought, wayward eclecticism of system, and want of accurate learning, were not remedied by Kingsley's splendid pictorial faculty, his creative imagination, or his brilliant style."[3] It is a relief to turn from this to the judgment of Dr. Fairbairn: "Fred-

[1] *The English Utilitarians*, vol. iii. p. 476.

[2] *Thomas Carlyle*, vol. iii. p. 109.

[3] George Saintsbury, *A History of Nineteenth Century Literature*, p. 370.

erick Maurice was a personality of rare charm, with a soul ever turned toward the light, with a large range of vision, and a love of love and light that makes him the most mystical thinker of our century."[1] John Stuart Mill, who knew Maurice and who had met him in debate, and who was grieved over the use that Maurice made of his powers, writes: "With Maurice I had for some time been acquainted through Eyton Tooke, who had known him at Cambridge, and although my discussions with him were almost always disputes, I had carried away from them much that helped to build up my new fabric of thought, in the same way as I was deriving much from Coleridge, and from the writings of Goethe and other German authors which I read during these years. I have so deep a respect for Maurice's character and purposes, as well as for his great mental gifts, that it is with some unwillingness I say anything which may seem to place him on a less high eminence than I would gladly be able to accord to him. But I have always thought that there was more intellectual power wasted in Maurice than in any other of my contemporaries. Few of them certainly have had so much to waste. Great powers of generalization, rare ingenuity and subtlety, and a wide perception of important and unobvious truths

[1] *Catholicism, Roman and Anglican*, p. 317.

served him not for putting something better into the place of the worthless heap of received opinions on the great subjects of thought, but for proving to his own mind that the Church of England had known everything from the first, and that all the truths on the ground of which the church and orthodoxy have been attacked (many of which he saw as clearly as any one) are not only consistent with the Thirty-nine Articles, but are better understood and expressed in those articles than by any one who rejects them."[1] This roll of witnesses may fittingly end with the testimony of Tennyson. Speaking of the members of the London Metaphysical Club, and recalling the names of many eminent men, including those of Huxley and Martineau, Tennyson refers to Maurice as "probably the greatest mind among them."

Speaking for myself, the Maurice whom I seem to know is the Maurice defined by Mill as a person of "great powers of generalization, rare ingenuity and subtlety, and a wide perception of important and unobvious truths." Mill's criticism is also well-founded. Maurice tried to make room in the creed of the Anglican church for the richer truth of the modern world. The new wine and the old wineskins do not belong together. Something should have been defi-

[1] J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 152, 153.

nitely and thankfully abandoned. Definite and vigorous rejection of the intellectually discredited is the duty to which Maurice was unequal. But this failure need not mislead, nor should it greatly embarrass the student of his writings today. Maurice was a vastly larger intellect in theology than any other of his time. He found himself in an age of transition, where it is so easy to break with history like F. W. Newman, or to take refuge under authority like J. H. Newman. Maurice saw in the theological tradition of the church something infinitely precious. This treasure was contained in an earthen vessel, the gold was sadly mixed with alloy, and working on the safe and conservative principle of development, Maurice made it the business of his teaching to discover and announce the higher meanings in the creeds of the church. He is doubtless open to criticism in much of his work; yet it seems to me his position is essentially sound. The tradition of faith is of infinite moment; it should not be abandoned; it should be put under the process of evolution.

Personally a spiritual splendor, Maurice is in his writings generally without form or comeliness. There are in him passages of great beauty; indeed it would not be difficult to quote from him sentences of classic excellence; and occasionally of his work as a whole much

might be said in praise of its form. For example, a clearer, better-ordered, sounder volume — a volume with distinction in title, in design, and in execution down to the last sentence — than that on "Social Morality" it would be difficult to name. On the whole, however, as an author there is in Maurice little beauty that men should desire him. In a profound way he answers to the prophetic conception of the suffering servant of Jehovah. Besides the lack of form, the number of Maurice's books creates dismay. Except in his "Theological Essays," his most difficult book, Maurice nowhere condenses his thought into one great expression. For these reasons he is read only by the few; but for those who have patience there is no name among the illustrious dead of the nineteenth century, not excepting Schleiermacher, who in range and sanity of vision, in due assertion of both the objective and the subjective in religion, the historical and the personal, in steadfast sense of the Eternal, and in the movement of essential reason — reason cleared of its poor scholastic impedimenta — is on the same level with Maurice. He will be found to cover an immense range of belief, with a depth infrequent in British thought, and to operate theology upon Edwards's foundation of the absoluteness of God as no other thinker has yet done.

III

We have come upon a new day in theology. Within the last twenty-five years in Great Britain and in New England the traditional theology has passed away. Like the ice fields that move south, these traditional beliefs have disappeared, melted under the power of the new intellectual climate into which they have floated. In the far north similar fields exist, and in the polar regions they always will exist in absolute safety; and in certain latitudes beliefs that cannot endure elsewhere are completely secure. They are embalmed in ignorance; they are shielded by excess of darkness; they are increased by atmospheric frigidity. From Calvinistic Scotland there has floated out into nothingness a great body of obsolete divinity. There has been no controversy about it. Progress has, like a flood, carried it away. The same is true of English Nonconformity. The traditional theological system has silently passed out of belief. The Arminianism of the educated Anglican is wasted to a shadow. Religion there is in abundant, happy power; but for the new religion there is only the promise of an adequate theology. In New England, and in all the enlightened portions of the country, the same fact is obvious. If we regret it, the regret cannot mend the

condition of affairs. If we think that the traditional theology was not a burden, but a high distinction, we must still add as we survey the educated world: —

> "It is not now as it has been of yore;
> Turn wheresoe'er I may,
> By night or day,
> The things which I have seen I now can see no more."

Within a quarter of a century a body of theological opinion, which had endured with only minor modifications for fifteen hundred years, has become obsolete. Not since the beginning of preaching has there been any time so hard upon the educated and honest minister.

There is still only the promise of a theology to replace that which has gone. And when we think what it means to elaborate a theology for a nation, for Christendom, one that shall appeal to men to-day as the old did during its millennial dominion, conforming the intellectual habit of society to itself for centuries and shaping thought upon all supreme issues, the promise of a theology is fitted to gladden the Christian heart and to stimulate able and honest men everywhere to do what may be done to carry the prophecy to fulfillment. This is the hope that is so mighty upon the educated minister. He knows that intellectual form is essential to the best condition of religious life. He knows that the evolution

of the new intellectual form must take time. The process cannot be forced. But if the ideal is secure, and if the process that moves toward it is real and living, the hope thus inspired is sufficient to make every thinker do his best to contribute something toward the final grand result. If it took the church five centuries to elaborate and perfect the Greek and the Latin theologies, we shall be open to the charge of impatience if we look for corresponding results in a generation.

The last five-and-twenty years have been immense years. During that time a new scientific conception has had to be mastered, the conception of evolution. This conception has given rise to a new natural history. The history of life upon the earth has been rewritten, and it has had to be read. This new history of animal life has issued in an astonishing natural history of man. Even this amazing volume could have been mastered much sooner had not pride and prejudice stood in the way. The story that Dr. Drummond was fond of telling illustrates the initial mood of a generation. A society lady and her daughter happened to be present at a lecture on evolution, in which man was described as the descendant of ancestors differing but little from the ape, and at the close of the lecture the mother remarked to her

daughter, "How shocking! It seems to be true; but let us try to hush it up." For about a decade this was the task which many good men set themselves. They wasted much precious time trying to hush it up. They forgot that "murder will out." It should be noted that the credit of mastering this new scientific conception of nature, of animal life, and of man, and of bringing it into harmony with the permanent intellectual and spiritual possessions of the race, belongs primarily not to scientific men, but to poetic and religious genius, and to men whose insight is due to the discipline of faith. Tennyson was, perhaps, first on the field with the sword of the scientific Goliath wrought over into the sword of the Lord. Browning followed with the step and the spirit of a conqueror. Dr. Drummond and John Fiske have done their best work as interpreters of the larger and nobler implications of Darwinism. Alfred Russel Wallace, one of the brightest scientific names of the period, should be gratefully remembered as an exception to the limitation that rested upon the vision of his brethren. A host of thinkers and writers have followed these leaders, and the result is that behind the frightful mask in which evolution rushed upon the stage, the face of a friend, the face of one sent from God, has been recognized. To achieve this mastery of a revo-

lutionary scientific conception within a quarter of a century is, of itself, a notable distinction for one generation of Christian thinkers.

Side by side with this, however, there has been a new theory of the Bible to be understood and adjusted to faith. The passage has had to be made from the letter to the spirit in the mode of viewing the Bible. The fact is no doubt true that the smaller Bible has gone and the immeasurably greater Bible has come. But a quarter of a century ago few could foresee this result. To set aside the authority even of the imprecatory psalms seemed to be opening the windows, not of heaven, for a second deluge. To break up the Old Testament into history and poetry and legend, to see in the history a predominant homiletical purpose, and to correct one sacred historian by another; to canvas the circle of prophetic ideas, and to discover limits to their availability for the modern world; to hint that the apostles were not always in absolute agreement with one another; to intimate that Paul becomes deeper and more adequate in his views as he grows older; to cherish the suspicion of a possible divergence in thought between the New Testament writers and Jesus Christ, appeared to be the signal of doom for the Bible as the word of God. That this appears so no longer implies an immense achieve-

ment. That the Bible has emerged from this fiery trial a greater book, is due first of all to its own intrinsic worth. The alloy in it does not constitute the gold, and the removal of the alloy only adds to the incontestable worth of the precious metal. The Bible has never been mighty because of the human weakness in it, nor on account of the imperfections that have gathered round the pure substance of its truth. And the criticism that has separated the weakness from the power, the judgment that has divided the sheep from the goats in it, has been the Lord's vindication of the Bible. But if it is primarily on account of the intrinsic merit of the Bible that it has come out of the fiery furnace of criticism a more glorious book, it is due to those who have managed the furnace that we recognize their faith, their courage, and their toil. That the issue of this ordeal has been to set Christ on high, to make the Bible into a witness for the Master, to turn attention from even the highest literary record to the Divine life, to force the appeal from the book to the transcendent Person from whom it obtains its imperishable meaning, has been the joyous surprise of students. And it should be added that there was at the beginning of this trial little to indicate the nobler results that have been won to faith. No scholar could foresee the issue of his

labors. He went out, like the first Hebrew, not knowing whither he went. He had but one clue, and it was enough, his belief in the truth. That truth is always for the interest of religion, that truth is forever the only trustworthy minister of Christian faith, the last quarter of a century is the shining demonstration. The intellect of the church said, "Let us know the truth about the Bible if the heavens fall." With that solitary and supreme interest as guide, the toil of a generation of scholars has discovered and declared the truth about the Bible, with the result that the heavens of religious reverence for the book have not fallen, with the result that they are higher, purer, more secure. To have done this, and to have done it through homage to truth, is an everlasting honor to Christian scholarship.

New philosophies have been encountered. In the period under review a powerful materialistic movement has been met. Old Lucretius has been preached with all the master's sincerity and passion, and with immeasurably more than the master's knowledge by modern philosophic materialists. An immense agnostic mood has beset the church. German idealism has been here, to be welcomed and to be feared; to be welcomed because in its strength Thomas Hill Green has given the only thorough and conclusive answer to the Humian individualism that is the ulti-

mate inspiration of the materialistic and agnostic mood; to be feared because from the ambitious movement of this essentially noble philosophy much that is imperishable in Christian faith has had hard fare. The moods of the great thinkers are sure to overspread society. Kant and Hegel have gone where Calvin and Edwards were wont to go. Theology has made in Ritschl and his disciples a brave struggle — not, however, with highly satisfactory results — to do its own thinking. The entanglement of Christian theology with the dominant philosophies of the world has hitherto been inevitable; and he would be bold who should deny that it has been providential. Still theology is a distinct and supreme interest; and while it is born to learn it is also ordained to rule. The last five-and-twenty years have thrown open to the Christian intellect a new world. The mastery of this new world has been the task of the generation now in power. It cannot, therefore, seem strange to the sympathetic student that criticism and destruction have been without corresponding theological construction. The old temple of dogmatic belief has been pulled down, the foundations have been cleared and laid anew in the abundance of the Eternal gospel. The new building is still at an unsatisfactory and even an unsightly stage of erection. Meanwhile ministers, with notable

exceptions, receiving in the seminaries either a theology which afterwards they had to get rid of, or none at all, have had during this unparalleled period to present their religion unclothed, or clothed upon by some house of their own poor manufacture. The sketch of such a production in times of great emergency may not be altogether without interest.

IV

A friend has kindly furnished notes of his student days from which the writer is able to construct what he thinks is a typical theological experience. This student began his work in theology near the middle of the seventies. The framework of faith was the system of Professor Park of Andover, one of the keenest of logicians and one of the most accomplished and powerful of teachers. This discipline in the theology of Professor Park our student did not receive directly from that master; he received it indirectly through Professor Barbour, a vigorous disciple and a noble man. This theology thus mediated was thoroughly absorbed by our friend, who went out as a home missionary in Maine, believing it to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. After a year of preaching, the time had come for an attempt at a full academic education. Harvard University was chosen, and

our student felt himself at once introduced to the thought of the world. The size of the intellectual world and its richness amazed and delighted him. The great philosophic thinkers of Greece, France, Great Britain, and Germany threw over him their wonderful fascination. It seemed to him that he had been introduced to the companionship of the intellectual kings of mankind. They vexed him by their problems and by their controversy one with another, but the vexation easily turned itself into serious inspiration. They puzzled him with a tentative spirit where he looked for a dogmatic one, with inconclusiveness where he hungered and thirsted for certainty. They moved under the spell of investigation, happy in the high mood of search, serene in the flow of their questions, while he was consumed with the passion for results. They brought his narrow and poorly built dogmatic world into confusion, and forced upon him the question, How can the old theology live with the new philosophy? This question started others. Is not reality in life, in being? Does not the world live independently of philosophy? Does not the spirit go in the strength of religion, careless of the truth or the error of any given theology, regardless of the possibility or impossibility of theology? Is not the sunlit and nourishing air given in the peaceful breathing of the

healthy child, and in the normal life of a true man is there not present the spirit of God? May a man not keep reality, even if for the time being he can retain no philosophic account of it; may he not rest in the being of the eternal silence when no dogmatic faith is possible? Are not philosophy and theology priestesses at the altar of reality, and in behalf of the infinite meaning that lies in the instinctive reason, in the conscious life of man?

How can the old theology live with the new philosophy? That question still pressed for an answer. It led to another still more fundamental, How does philosophy live? To this there could be but one reply. Philosophy lives by proving itself true, by adequately accounting for facts, by satisfying life with its interpretations. Philosophy lives through profounder reconciliation with human existence; and against its rivals it lives by the sword of the spirit. The critical construction of human life, the critical treatment of philosophies, is the business of philosophy and the process in which it exists and grows. Is it otherwise with theology? Is it anything but construction through criticism? Must it not for the sake of its health stand, like philosophy, exposed to all the winds that blow? Is not a protective tariff as bad in theology as it is in philosophy? Even in industry it is a con-

fession of weakness, a measure of safety in the interest of the helpless against brutal strength, the function of the nurse for the infant. Even in trade the idea of it as everlasting is a disgrace. Can it be otherwise in the supreme work of mankind, where freedom of competition and criticism would seem to be essential to the highest product? And can we not trust the consumer in these affairs of the intellect as we do the consumer in trade? "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time." Could there be, for the interests of philosophy and theology, a better platform than these famous words of the greatest ruler of the nineteenth century?

In the conflict of opinions the appeal must always be to Cæsar. The problems of the reason can find their solution only through the reason. Philosophy and theology are alike in this: they are reasoned expressions of certain aspects of life. Where they deal with the same subject and differ they must fight out their battle on the field of reason. There is no possible excuse for shielding Augustine or Calvin or Edwards from the free and searching criticism to which Descartes and Spinoza, Locke and Hume, Kant and Hegel are subjected. And where the theologian and the philosopher differ, the difference can

be justly settled only in favor of the thinker with the stronger reason on his side. The prize should go to the deepest and most adequate interpreter of life. Where philosophy and theology agree they must combine against the two fundamental enemies of civilization, atheism and inhumanity.

It will be seen that some clearness and quiet have come into the dark and troubled environment of our student. It is, however, easy to overestimate the relief that has actually arrived. He has obtained an immensely wider outlook upon the world of thought, and he has come to a few conclusions about the primacy of life and the function of reason in the service of it. But he has taken no decisive steps toward the reconciliation of traditional theology and historical philosophy. He sees indeed that at many points they are in dead antagonism; and he thinks that the world should treat them alike. It does not seem fair to expose philosophy to the fire of criticism and to cover theology from that ordeal. But beyond these preliminaries he has thus far been unable to go; and there is the imperious cry of the spirit that requires instant attention. Accordingly our student looks about him for a resource, a city of refuge, until these calamities are overpast. Here is the New Testament in Greek. In the New Testament here are the

words of Jesus. They are not always certainly ascertainable, embedded as they are in the reports of disciples; and yet they are, for the most part, clear and authentic. Rest here for a while. Take this spiritual discipline under the unquestionable Master of the soul. Listen to the address that he makes to life. Brood over this surpassing ethical idealism that dates itself from the heart of the ethical God. Consider this Divine man as the prophet of the Highest, struggle to lay to heart his wisdom, merge manhood in discipleship to him, lift up the spirit in the joy of an infinite moral hope, bend low that all the waves and billows of his cleansing grace may go over you; do this and wait. Wait upon the Lord, a strong city in the day of trouble.

> "A mighty fortress is our God,
> A bulwark never failing;
> Our helper he amid the flood
> Of mortal ills prevailing."

And under the shelter of this Presence let the philosophic and theologic discipline go on.

An emergency has risen in the life of our student. He has accepted a pastorate in Connecticut. Here is a pulpit to be fired with faith. That he does not fear. For in his city of refuge he has received the Christian faith into his blood, and in his joy he is absolutely without fear. He is conscious of life in the presence of

an infinite spiritual possession, and he is indifferent to the theological denudation which he has undergone. But here is an ecclesiastical council to be satisfied, not with high moral feeling, generous evangelical appreciations, pronounced Christian purpose, and cold neutrality toward New England theology, — ready, under suitable conditions, to pass into torrid antagonism, — but with definite old-fashioned doctrine. The notes of our student's fate at this stage in his progress are illegible in the highest degree. But a general reflection can be made out to the following effect, which may be of some interest. It is matter of regret to all those who have been in mortal danger, and who have made good their escape, that they threw away so much of their property in the panic of peril. The apostolic ship is a symbol. In the exceeding labor of the ship in the storm, overboard went the freight; and the next day the tackling. In this case it was wise, because the ship was lost, and might have been sooner but for the precaution taken. If, however, the ship had been saved, the regrets over the unnecessary loss of the cargo would have been deep and lasting. The theological peril is nearly always accompanied by unnecessary indifference to possessions. Traditional beliefs are apt to seem to the soul rocked in the tempest as in league with the depths that

would engulf all faith and all life. And when the peril is past, and one is securely at home in his faith, and laboring to refurnish it, regrets will come that so many useful and historically inspired articles should have been so foolishly thrown away. The blue of the sky is upon every sea, and the light of God is in all the high and serious beliefs of the Christian church. The freshness that the meadow wins so abundantly from the upper air one will discover in some measure repeated in the oasis surrounded by burning sand; and the grace of God that overspreads the New Testament is sure to find spots upon which it can rest even in the wildernesses of theological opinion.

Our student has his regrets, but regrets are usually vain. They rarely arrive in time to prevent unwise action, and for the present both philosophy and theology are gone. Only faith abides, living, tempestuous, invincible. Two or three definite beliefs serve as form to this faith. Man is responsible for his life; his power over himself, call it owing to grace or owing to will or because of anything else that you please, is indubitable. Man is the master of his soul; he is the maker of his character. By the grace of the universe or against it, here is fact. Our student, now a young preacher, went in the power of this consciousness and in the fury of

it; and if his sermons were not sound there was in them a moral gale. Another belief was that Jesus was the supreme master of himself, and that he is, on that account, the supreme master of all who aspire to put life under the sovereignty of the moral ideal. Our preacher here first learned the strength of the Son of Man, first felt and confessed the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, first entered into the vicariousness of the supreme human life, first knew the comfort of an insight out of which were to come a new heaven and a new earth. A third belief was that on the whole the universe sides with the man who sides with righteousness. This is not a long creed, and yet it is worthy of all respect, on its own account and also on account of what may issue from it. It is not an incoherent faith. The man who sees and feels that it is his vocation to become the moral master of himself discovers the Christ who is the supreme master of himself, and who, on that account, is to be accepted as the divine guide to freedom; and finally the insight is obtained that declares the universe as on the side of Christ and his disciple. The moral idealist meets the Christ who is ideal and real at once, and together they fare forward in the sympathy of the Infinite Idealist who is at the same time absolute reality. In the happy possession of

these great convictions, our student trusts to the years, with their intellectual toil and their spiritual obligation and privilege, to bring into vision greater compass and richness and order and sympathy.

V

It is clear that our student cannot permanently remain in this attitude. If his three burning convictions are sound, he must go on; if they are illusory, they will speedily exhaust his interest in them. Nothing is diviner than this test of time. The wood, hay, stubble, and the silver, the gold, and the precious stones, are revealed beyond the possibility of doubt by the day, the furnace of time seven times heated. Stationary truth turns out to be not truth at all; the fact that it is without the power of growth condemns it. And the feelings and instincts that exhaust themselves in the highest service that man can render to man are thereby chargeable with a certain measure of falsehood. Somehow they have passed for more than they are worth. They have taken the place of something greater than themselves. Their failure, their exhaustion, should turn the mind to that deeper thing upon which they drew for their passing strength and charm.

The meadow that rests upon the springs that

never run out, and that lies under the happy ministry of sun and cloud, is the permanent basis of the unbroken succession of harvests; and the soul in Christian experience, resting upon God and open to his discipline, is the great generative source of the convictions that support the higher work of the world. The soul in experience is indispensable to science; the soul in Christian experience is indispensable to theology. For her materials science is dependent upon the eyes and the ears and the hands; for the sources of reality she must go to the senses. The science that is not a rational procedure through sensuous experience is foolishness; the task of science is not that of an originator of facts — it is that of an appraiser of facts. She is not a creator of material; her work lies in the endless process of ever completer valuation. Theology creates nothing that has worth in it. Abstract theology — that is, theological theory devised apart from the pressure of facts — is simple imposition. It is a world of fancy floating among realities and claiming to be one of them. The soul in Christian experience is the foundation of theology. Science without senses is as reasonable as theology without God in the process of life. The outward world is unreachable until it melts through the senses into experience; the spiritual world is unattainable until

it has dissolved in the conscious soul. It is the heart that makes the theologian; that is, the spiritual nature is the generative source of the facts upon which theology is to put its construction. Faith precedes intellect; that is, the process of the spiritual life goes before the knowledge of that process. Or as Saint Schopenhauer says, the intellect is as much instrumental "as teeth and claws."

Our student thinks that he has made a great discovery. He has hit upon the truth that the spiritual world is unattainable except in and through experience. In order to be a great spiritual thinker one must first gain a great spiritual life. This suggests several interesting inquiries, and these are the sources of theology, the method of theology, the task of theology, and the helps to theology. The source has been already indicated as experience; but so far it might appear that this meant individual experience. It does mean that, but it also means something far greater than that. The individual is in society, society is world-wide, and it has an immeasurable history behind it. Without their consent men are members of a moral community; and the total life of the race is the experience of a moral race. Morality is not a superstructure upon a prior and pure physical basis; it is the temper which, as in iron, per-

vades human life. The physical is completely in the moral sphere because it is the inevitable subject of this temper, good or bad. The primary source of theology is man, individual, social, historic, under inevitable and everlasting moral organization. This organism of man in the spirit has operated in a twofold way. It has been working under the law of sin and death; and this vast and lurid chapter in the experience of mankind is momentous in its concern. Man has gone into activity under the law of the spirit of life in Christ; and here there is a world of institutions, customs, literatures, to be studied as symbolic of life. Finally there is the Bible, the supreme expression of the supreme spiritual experience of mankind. In and under the physical life of the race, under its sin and shame, under its righteousness and hope, under the church contemporaneous and historic, under the Old Testament and the New, is the total spiritual experience of man. That is the deep into which, through every symbol, the theologian must look. That is the form of God, the presence of the Infinite with which he must reckon. The old Norse god thought he could easily empty the horn given him to drink. He was amazed to find that after his mightiest draughts the horn was still as full as ever. He did not know that below the lower end of the horn lay the

sea, the unfathomable sea. Beneath human experience and filling it is the Holy Ghost. Men know that they are sinners because he is in them. They are able to love and believe in righteousness on account of his indwelling. They are organized into homes, societies, nations, and into a humanity through his prevailing persuasions. Great literatures rise out of the human heart because he is there; Bibles are born through his strength. To him we owe through human life the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian. Jesus is Lord by the authority of the Spirit. And this is the Infinite in human life and behind it that offers itself to the heroic purpose of the theologian.

The method of theology is the endeavor of the spirit. So far as may be, dogma must be dissolved in life. The endeavor to reproduce the great moods that lie behind the great theologies is essential. What Paul and Luther meant by justification can be surely compassed in no other way. The exigencies of the spirit are concerned in dogma; and the dogmatic survivals are almost sure to be the more or less imperfect utterance of some precious experience. Even the New England doctrine of willingness to be damned for the glory of God is grand through the moral idealism, the high ethical disinterestedness for which it stands. In disown-

ing the form here it would be an unspeakable loss to miss the spirit. We must break through the form of the doctrine into the life of which it is often a sorrowful memorial. Under the systematic exhibition of the decrees of God, under election, atonement, regeneration, justification, and sanctification, under heaven and hell and the whole vast edifice of traditional theology, there is a vital meaning that one cannot afford to miss. Scholarship is presupposed; the careful and laborious method of the thorough student is taken for granted. These are indispensable, and yet they are insufficient. Work by the intelligence alone is barren; it can never compass the secret of Christian history. Work by the spirit must be added. One must endeavor to relive the greater life of mankind; one must endeavor to reproduce the whole high experience out of which the great things and the small in theology have come. Once in possession of the precious life, criticism that means the death of immemorial error, and thinking that means the birth of truth, are possible. Copernicus overthrew the Ptolemaic astronomy by getting a profounder possession of the stars. He got in a better way at the reality which the old astronomer loved and served to the best of his ability. The new astronomer kept the old reality; he only discredited a memorable but poor

account of it. This is the method of the genuine theologian. He will possess himself of the spiritual reality of the world, and if he discredits past forms of thought, he will do it because of his consciousness of the Divine reality that all true servants of God have loved and served.

The task of theology is now plain as it appeared to our student. It is to find the meaning of human experience, and particularly of the Christian form of human experience. It is the metaphysic of the spiritual life of man in its Christian form. Ultimate meanings are the object of its search. And the search will be most fruitfully conducted in the old way. There is the total Christian consciousness as found in our own time, as it appears in the puritan and the reformer, as it presents itself in the wonderful mediæval world, in patristic achievements, in apostolic labors and literature, and above all as it commands our homage in Jesus Christ. To supply an interpretation of this Christian consciousness that shall be provisionally adequate and serviceable is the task of theology. To present in terms of reason an account of this amazing phenomenon, to lift the precious world of Christian life into a reasonable orderly world of meanings, is the high vocation of the theologian. He can fulfill it as he takes for his model the Hebrew prophet who divined the

meaning of the bush that burned on the hillside and was not consumed, only after he had uncovered and fallen awestruck as in the presence of God.

The question of helps has been answered by anticipation in treating of other points. They need be no more than named. Old theologies are an indispensable help. In Edwards, to take a great example, there is a discipline in truth and an exhibition of error that is nearly invaluable. To read Edwards with open and yet with reverent eyes, and to divide him into the useless and the useful, the exhausted and the inexhaustible, the perishable and the imperishable, would be to compass a theological education of the highest order. What is true in his case holds in some degree of all the greater names in Christian history. Even in their ashes live their wonted fires. But old theologies must be supplemented with new philosophies. The last two centuries have developed philosophic insight of amazing range and richness; and the worlds of ideas upon all the great interests of life lying in these philosophic systems cannot be neglected. If Edwards were here to-day, he would make spoil of these philosophies in behalf of his sublimer interest, and would make himself worthy of the title of celestial thief bestowed upon Milton. The best science must not be overlooked.

In our time the debt to science on the part of the higher thinking is immeasurable. This will continue to be the case for centuries to come, and the best way to show gratitude for the general results of science, put at the disposal of the educated world, is to turn them, as the ideas of force and evolution have been turned, to uses which seem to lie beyond the power of the scientific man himself. The general progress of the world must be regarded. There is in the world a universal movement forward upon better ends, and in consequence a new atmosphere surrounds the student and thinker. Above all one must depend upon the insight and sympathy born in the school of Christ. One must strive to have one's theology worthy of the career and spirit of Christ. The full meaning of Christ is the highest theology, and that full meaning is the ideal toward which the student should press. We may be sure of one thing, that the final theology will not come from old theologies or new philosophies, it will not come from the schools of Origen or Augustine, Calvin or Edwards, Kant or Hegel, although these great names and others of kindred greatness are sure to be remembered in it; it will come from the school of Christ.

CHAPTER III

FAITH AND ITS CATEGORIES

I

In the light of modern philosophic discussion, the statement may safely be made that the world exists as an aggregate of individuals in interrelations. No individuals exist without relations. Every road leads from a beginning to a goal; every stream moves from its rise to the sea. At both ends, in the cases of the road and the stream, and all the way between, relations are inevitably given. The single apple recalls the tree from which it was plucked, the blossom in which it began, the sap out of which it grew, the long summer and the solar force through which it was matured. The particular bird is never a Melchizedek, without father, without mother, without descent. It carries in its flight the inevitable reminder of the nest in which it was brooded, the winged industry by which it was there fed, the procession of ancestors from which it drew its life. Its flight is in the sky, and in its song there is a reminiscence of the primeval bird-melodies. The terms father,

son, brother, friend, citizen, man, when used of individual persons, necessarily exhibit these particular persons in relation. The human body is an organism, all the parts are in mutual relations, everything in this physical system is means and end at one and the same time. The part is for the whole, and the whole is for all the parts. The human mind is an organism of thought. It is a multiplicity in unity. Sensations, perceptions, memories, judgments, volitions, all are penetrated with feeling, all are centred in one soul, all exist for it, and it exists in and through them. Society is organized in this way. Individualism is but a half truth; the other half is relationism, the action and reaction upon one another of the sum of the individuals. The universe is a reality only through this fact. It consists of an infinite number of individuals, in relation to one another and to their Creator and Preserver. This elemental view of the world is strikingly pictured in Tennyson's familiar lines,

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower — but *if* I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."

This is an illustration of my contention that there are no individuals without relations, without endless relations.

It is equally true that there are no relations without individuals. No relation ever walked down the street except in the form of an individual. Individuals are inconceivable out of all relations; relations are inconceivable except among individuals. To seize the individual and to neglect the relation is to find your trout and to forget to dress and eat it; to grasp the relation and to ignore the individual is to dream of eating the fish that has not been caught, that does not even exist. Between these two extremes modern philosophy has swung. British individualism has caught the fish, but found it useless; German idealism has in dreams eaten the fish that was still uncaught. The atomism of British thought and the relationism of German philosophy must be combined into the confession that the world exists as an aggregate of individuals in interrelations. Nothing is wholly for itself; nothing can be anything for others unless it is at the same time something for itself.

What is knowledge? If the world is a sum of individuals in a community of relations, what is the attitude of the human mind to this world? Is the mental world a creation in correspondence with the real world? Knowledge is of individual objects in their relations, in their more significant aspects, in their universal bearings. For the philosophy of knowledge one is more

and more constrained to go to childhood. The subtle and marvelous process is best understood through insight into its history. The infant has no consciousness but of want, no language but a cry. It would be the greatest romance in the world if one could adequately and vividly picture the emergence of the infant mind from the awful isolation and darkness in which it comes hither into the full society and light of adult existence. It stands upon one clear and firm position, — physical demand and supply. That is the star of hope for the struggling intellect, the prophetic source of the cosmos that is slowly to rise out of these endless confusions. The infant's knowledge probably exists in the strangest detachments. Does it know its mother? It is close to the blasphemous to raise the question, and to say that the infant a month old certainly does not know its mother may seem to be too base to be forgiven. In the absence of demonstration it is perilous to say anything upon a subject lying so close to joy and pride; and yet it would appear that what the child at first means by mother is a wonderfully comforting touch, a strangely soothing sound, a heavenly but mysteriously fugitive smile. A delightful sense of touch, that is one nameless benefactor; a reassuring sound, that is another; a blessed patch of color, that is still another.

At first these three flying detachments are all. The separate senses give separate sensations. Touch, hearing, and sight are wholly isolated; and the friendly world that looks in upon the brave infant soul struggling in the dim twilight is broken up into three distinct worlds. At first there is no dream that the touch and the tone and the smile belong together, and that they manifest a single object. A clear look into the infant soul would probably reveal its knowledge as a series of sensational abstractions. The sources of hope and fear to the small existence, the forces of help and of pain, reveal themselves through the five senses; and originally there is very likely no association between these sources and forces. Probably the child has five distinct and separate worlds, and not one. Its objects are sensations that provoke and that pass understanding. Flavors, odors, peculiar sensations of touch, certain tones, patches of color, make up the five small worlds of infancy. The day arrives, however, when one touch, one tone, and one smile are united, held tight, waiting for a name; and the hour comes when to this synthesis of sensations, and to the benign power behind them, the term mother, or its equivalent, is given. Here is the real beginning of mental life, the grouping of the various sensations of taste and smell and touch and hearing and sight,

not only as forming an inward experience pleasant or otherwise, but also as originating in a single source or object beyond the mind. The world breaks up for the adult mind so clearly and inevitably into distinct objects — into grass, flower, tree, mountain, lake, stream, sea; into the forms of life in the ocean, in the earth, and in the air; and into the individuals that make up human society — that it can hardly imagine a time when this certain order was not present; and yet it is evident to the student that the world of sensational life evolves itself slowly and with extreme, although unremembered difficulty into the world of distinct objects. What we mean by an object is a permanent source of sensations of a given range and character; and the intellectual activity by which sensations are grouped with reference to their sources beyond the mind is indeed unimaginably great. The delimitation of one source from another is a feat whose mystery has never been fully explored. Through the ceaseless repetitions of experience the mind comes out at length in the clearness of its great achievement. Its own sensational life has gathered itself about the outward forces from which it began; it has referred itself to a multitude of centres beyond itself; it has organized itself into things that appeal to taste and smell and touch and hearing and sight;

into a host of individual objects that are tangible, audible, and colored; into a world of individuals existing in interrelations and in space and in time. Kant's Æsthetic and Logic, the first and second parts of the "Critique of Pure Reason," are justly regarded as a philosophic masterpiece, but that masterpiece is poor in comparison with the feat of the instinctive reason in every child, by which a few vagrant sensations related to physical want are developed and organized into the marvelous objective world of the adult mind. The impressive thing about Greek grammar, for example, is not the learning and judgment of the grammarian; but the fact that all these parts of speech, this declination of noun and adjective, this voice, mood, and conjugation of verb, this wonderful syntax, should exist in living, unconscious reproduction in Herodotus and Xenophon, in Plato and Thucydides, and in the speech of all educated persons in the Periclean Athens. The work of the instinctive reason of a race embodied in a great language, the work of the instinctive reason of the individual appropriating the achievement of his nation, and employing it with complete accuracy in the careless freedom of living speech, is indeed a marvel. It is a parallel to that other and yet greater marvel, the definite world of individuals in interrelation into which man has organized

his sensational life, and the conquest of this world which, through a mystic, unfathomable, and wholly unremembered process, every child makes for itself. Surely one can view narrowly neither the process of language-building nor that of world-building without recalling the words of a great thinker: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." [1]

But there is another world to be accounted for, and another kind of knowledge to be considered. The natural world has its analogue in the spiritual, and the sensational experience that ultimately organizes itself into a world of natural objects has its parallel in the moral experience that organizes itself into a world of moral beings centred in the Supreme moral being. The belief is common that the individual moral being lives in a world of moral beings like himself, in a moral order declaring itself in human history and through the supporting cosmic environment, and in God over all. Whether one considers this world as real or as an illusion, it is still a wonderful piece of architecture. How did it arise? Out of the moral life of mankind, interpreted by genius, lifted to the full measure of its magnificence by Christ. It has its origin

[1] Philippians ii. 12, 13.

in the individual sense of moral power and accountability. There is no step into that world possible until the spiritual self has been discovered. That spiritual self, and its life, both of honor and of shame, lead outward. The adult person in a well-ordered moral community carries with him a consciousness so clear and mature of the human fellowship in which he stands, that the achievement which results in this amazing consciousness is nearly unrecognized. Education makes the process much easier and shorter than it otherwise would be. Education first awakens the spirit to the sense of itself, and then through a careful process, along a royal road made by the supreme teachers, it draws it on out of itself into a vast community of spirits with a common history and a common destiny. But powerful as education is, it is still nothing but an awakener. It cannot force the process of insight. The moral individual must see the next step before it can be taken. For the individual there is no moral world until it is seen by that individual. Therefore the architecture of the race is not available for the individual, except as he is led to construct an image of it out of his own moral experience. Out of the sense of self-respect and shame, of things well done and ill done, of accepted standards honored and dishonored, of commanding ideals obeyed

and defied, the individual moral person is accentuated. Thus the consciousness of moral personality is heightened until it becomes the sovereign fact in experience. But out of this same class of feelings there is elaborated a world of men, presided over by the God and Father of men.

What shall I do with my conscience? That is the cry of the individual. It must become the consciousness of a world of individuals, each having a conscience answering to his. The conscience of our first individual involves this. It overflows the channels of mere individuality; it finds beyond itself a multitude of moral centres like itself; it constitutes itself into a world of moral persons, among whom it is one. It goes farther. What shall I do with my conscience? It must rise into the consciousness of God. The implication of the social conscience and the individual brings the individual person to the sense of the moral world; the implication of the Divine conscience with the human brings the soul to the consciousness of God. The process by which the conscience of the child becomes the consciousness of a moral world and a moral God is the subtlest, the deepest, and the most amazing in the life of man. The progress of psychology enables one to sketch with some vividness and some approach to truth the process by which the intellect of the child becomes a

world of natural objects; but thus far there is no effective help to deeper and more faithful insight into the evolution by which the conscience of the child becomes the sense of a community of moral persons centred in a moral God. And yet this evolution of the child conscience is the supreme fact in human existence. To this evolution we are indebted for the permanent appreciation of the moral world of Jesus, and for the moral God in whom the conscience of Jesus fulfilled itself. Here, if anywhere, one feels that there is a spirit in man, and that the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. Moral humanity is the building of God through the Spirit and for the Spirit.

II

The instinctive intellect results in an aggregate of individual objects in interrelation. This bewildering total is turned over to the reflective intellect. In order to do anything with it, it must first be made manageable. Some shorthand method must be found of recording our thoughts about it. The categories are simply a shorthand method of thought in an infinite world of related individuals. The categories are the leading affirmations which philosophic thought makes about the world; they bring into view the more significant aspects of things. It is this

function of the categories of thought, as setting in conspicuous isolation the more significant aspects of the world, that makes the history of them a living interest, and that lends to logic a permanent fascination. Where the comprehension of everything is out of the question, a selection must be made. And the basis of this selection is the fact that some things are more significant than others. The world remembers Shakespere, counts him as part of itself, not because he was more real as an individual than his forgotten neighbor with whom he passed the time of day for a generation, but because he was more significant. It is significance that makes men great and memorable. It is significance that determines selection in the case of the genuine historian, the scientific observer, the philosophic thinker. Our human world thus comes to be a significant world called out from the infinite and unmanageable world of fact. As we cannot take all, we take what we think is worthiest and best.

As has been said, this search for the more significant aspects of things is the soul of all thinking. It gives life to the crudest of the early philosophers. When Thales fixes upon water as the chief thing in nature, he means that it is the most significant. Anaximander dwelling upon the unlimited, Anaximenes preaching the power of air, Pythagoras fascinated by the sense of

order and harmony, and speaking the great word cosmos, Parmenides proclaiming the unity of being, Heraclitus emphasizing the world-process, the ceaseless becoming of things, Anaxagoras striking out the pregnant sentence that mind orders the universe, and Socrates turning away from nature to man, are living thinkers to-day, in different degrees to be sure, because they one and all strive to isolate what was to them the supremely significant aspect of the real world. We may not like their taste, we may think their judgment childish; and yet we cannot fail to note in them the genuine beginnings of the grand philosophic vocation. They are after the things that have in them the highest meaning; and if thinkers to-day are serious they are engaged in the same great quest.

The confession of ignorance on the part of Socrates was completely sincere. His vocation was to discover the universally significant aspects of man's life, and he was puzzled and baffled on every hand. He found a multitude of shallow persons calling this, that, and the other the chief things. He found men speaking about temperance, courage, friendship, righteousness, holiness, and love as the great meanings of human existence. He did not deny that they spoke the truth. He only wanted them to conduct his mind to these supreme aspects of man's expe-

rience, and he discovered that the teachers who used general words had no general views. He saw that when they employed terms which, if they mean anything, isolate some supreme aspect of life, these teachers were really lost in the individual. To them all phases of an object were equally significant; for them the individual was nothing but an individual. The dialectical triumph of Socrates is so full of charm, it appeals so strongly both to admiration and the sense of humor, that one is apt to overlook the seriousness of its purpose. It is the exposure of the mere pretense of the possession of significant views of human life. The exposure of this pretense was the great negative preparation for the positive appreciation of reality. Socrates doubtless found and rested in certain highly significant aspects of man's world; but his work was not in proclaiming these and in vindicating them. His business was by merciless criticism to get the unmeaning and mock thinking out of the way. He abolished a whole world of pretense, and thus made room for a new world of sincere and valid insight into the nature of man.

In the hands of Plato the categories, or the more significant aspects of reality, expand and contract with the power and witchery of his genius. What are called the Platonic ideas, and which are presented chiefly in the "Meno," the

"Phædo," the "Phædrus" and the "Republic," are nothing but the highly significant aspects of the universe lifted into independence, made to constitute an eternal mental world, carried up into identity with the Divine thoughts in accordance with which God creates all things. This is philosophic poetry. It is not true as it stands, and yet no theist will deny that it is essentially true. There is a multitude of significant aspects to the universe; so far Plato is right. They constitute a hierarchy, ranging from the lower meanings that appear in things up to the highest as it appears in the Good, or in God. Again Plato is sound. But he is altogether wrong in detaching his world of meanings from the world of living facts, in creating a universe of concepts or thoughts, and of substituting it for the reality. For the living world as the subject of selective intellect, rejoicing over the ability to reach partial appreciations, we find in Plato when we take him in the letter, and not in the spirit, "an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories." Still, as the matchless poetry of philosophy, the idealism of Plato enshrines an imperishable truth. The task of the human mind is to discover the general meanings of the world, and this vocation of human thought is set forth in the Platonic Dialogues mentioned above with unexampled fascination.

In the later Dialogue of the "Philebus" there takes place a startling reduction of this world of meanings. Here the categories, or chief aspects of existence, are four. These are the unlimited, the limited, the mixture of the unlimited and limited, and cause. Existence is at first indefinite; in the process of being it breaks up into individuals, which become such by putting limits upon the unlimited, and the force in and behind this process is cause. This list of the chief meanings of existence is interesting for two reasons. It shows that Plato is not satisfied with the vast poetic scheme of his earlier days, that he is attempting to reduce and to improve it. And it indicates that in the appropriate mixture of the unlimited and the limited, there lay the philosophy of "health, music, harmony, equable temperature, beauty, strength, virtue."[1] Thus the unlimited is pure, indeterminate existence, existence without accentuated significance. In the process of being, existence becomes individualized, assumes a special character, acquires limits. When the limit is the appropriate limit, there results the perfect individual life, — flower, animal, man; there results, too, the perfect art, — music, harmony, beauty; there results, finally, the perfect character, — temperament, strength, virtue. The imperfections of

[1] Dr. Jackson, *Journal of Philology*, vol. x.

the world are due to the union of the unlimited with the inappropriate limit. The badness of the world comes from a mixture wholly bad of these two fundamental forces. And the cause that works toward the perfect union of unlimited and limited is creative mind. One can see how significant these four strange ways of looking at the universe were to Plato.

Aristotle did not like the earlier thought of Plato about the chief ways of regarding existence, mainly for two reasons. It was a system in the clouds, a poetic symbol; and it did not help forward the appreciation of the real world. Both objections are valid. Aristotle was compelled, therefore, to discover the categories for himself. He found his principle of discovery in the several things that one can say of an individual being. It exists; existence, therefore, is one way of looking at things. It exists in a certain measure and in a given manner; magnitude and character, therefore, are aspects of reality. It exists in relation, in place, and in time; relation, place, and time are, therefore, further categories. It is possessed or it has possession; it is active or it is passive; these are still further ways of regarding things. "Everything signifies either existence, or quantity, or quality, or relation, or place, or time, or position, or possession, or action, or passion."[1]

[1] *Organon, Categories*, iv.

Such are the famous ten categories of Aristotle, or the significant aspects of things.

It is easy enough to criticise the scheme. Why should Aristotle think of things in ten ways and in no more? No answer is given; none can be given that shall be adequate. Clearly also, his ways of looking at things run into one another. They are not distinct in several instances. Place, time, position, action and passion are given as independent aspects of existence, and yet it is clear that they are only different forms of the category of relation. Being in relations; to this the entire scheme is reducible. But while inadequate, the thought underlying the scheme is deeply interesting. Here is one of the greatest of human minds at work in the morning of philosophic endeavor, when little had been satisfactorily done anywhere, and all high undertakings were new, searching for the supremely significant aspects of the world. That the search was not a success should neither decrease admiration for the clear adventure of the great thinker, nor diminish the inspiration that comes from the worthy representation of one high aspect of the vocation of man.

Kant expanded the ten categories of Aristotle to twelve. Upon this table, deduced from the forms of the judgment, Kant bestowed immense labor. And regarded, as we have regarded

other attempts, as a new endeavor in happier circumstances to discover the chief meanings of the world, and to reduce to order the different ways in which the mind looks at it, thanks, and only thanks, are due Kant for his work. That it has proved less complete than he esteemed it is not strange. In the heat of creation every poem, every philosophic achievement, seems to its author great and final. It is only the Lord who can look at everything that he has made from the dispassionate mood of history and pronounce it good; and he can do it only because his perfect ideal is ceaselessly realizing itself through endless opportunity.

Hegel is the last great elaborator of the categories. He has shown, as no one has ever done, and chiefly because he has worked by the light of all his predecessors, that the universe is a system of meanings, that this system of meanings is in reality sunk in it like a network, and that reality is in this system. The task of Hegel is to evolve from the Absolute meaning the entire system of meanings, and thus to exhibit the inmost heart of reality and the process of its life. If Hegel has failed, it is because the task is too much for man. If he has failed, his failure has yet filled the world with new insights. The sense of meaning in the universe is stronger in all genuine thinkers because of Hegel, and the

growth of these meanings into an ampler and surer order is due largely to his influence. He is the only modern who is strong enough to be ranked with the two great names of Greece; and he is the worthiest successor to them in the philosophic vocation.

This review of the endeavor on the part of philosophers to discover the chief ways of looking at the real world has made clear these two things: the movement is inevitable; it is primarily a movement, not in philosophic, but in human reason. The world of individuals in all their interrelations is too vast for man. The selective process must be applied to it. A gradation of values clearly exists in it. Everything is not as significant as everything else. Upon this perception the human mind works; it proceeds to discover in the endless real world the world chiefly significant for man. Of this inevitable human movement the historic search for the categories is the philosophic representation. The movement is inevitable, and it is inevitably incomplete. The endless real world concerns man more deeply than he knows; and the discovery of this deeper significance of the real for mankind upsets all the tables of categories Platonic, Aristotelian, Kantian, and Hegelian. The movement in search of the chief meanings of being is inevitable, and it is inevitably subject to revision and expansion.

III

The instinctive intelligence results in the infinite world of faith, and this world it hands over to the reflective intelligence for profounder appreciation. The selective process must be applied to this world. In its grand totality it passes understanding. In it God is involved with the human spirit, with the human race, through a vast historic movement. The religious soul, the religious community, is rooted and grounded in the Infinite love. That unseen grasp upon God sinks downward and spreads abroad in a way that is past finding out. The comprehension of Christianity as the life of the world is out of the question. It is as much beyond theology as the comprehension of the natural world is beyond science. All that is possible for theology is the appreciation of the more significant aspects of the world of Christian faith. Everything in faith is not of equal value with everything else. A gradation of values is perceived in the Bible, in Christian experience, in the career of Christ, in the revelation of God in Christ. In this infinite total those things that most concern Christian faith are discovered; they are called out, and constituted into a world by themselves. Our world of intelligent faith is a world made out of the infinite world

of Christian reality. The Old Testament is an example. It was written by different men in definite but widely divergent circumstances over a period of nearly a thousand years. Each writing of which the Old Testament is composed had a definite meaning for the time in which it was written. The collection had an elastic and yet a well-defined significance for the leaders of Israel in her later years. And it is true that for a century the increasing effort of Hebrew scholarship has been to restore this local coloring of time, place, person, and original intention. Some success has doubtless attended this toil. But after all, the Old Testament in the times, places, persons, and purposes of its original composition is beyond the reach of research, and if it were open to research it would still remain beyond comprehension. That old world in which the Hebrew Scriptures originated has vanished, not in the sense of ceasing to be, but in that of having passed beyond our mental horizon. It lives, but it lives in God. It lives in the sum total of religious reality; it is "lost in God, in Godhead found." The Old Testament of to-day is a book highly significant for the modern world; and the essential task of scholarship is to develop these points of significance into lines. All that scholarship can give is the modern meaning of the Old Testament rooted in the

ancient meaning. The same thing may be said of Shakespere, Dante, Homer. The result of scholarship never amounts to more than the clear genesis of the modern appreciation from the original intention. The classic is distinguished by its permanent susceptibility to modern appreciation. If one could know everything significant, the fact that any writing once meant something for somebody would be sufficient inducement for one to read it. But since one can know only a few things, the literature of the past that has an accentuated susceptibility toward modern appreciation, alone has a title to one's attention. All this goes to illustrate the selective process applied to reality. It is meant to show that men live in a world of values, found indeed in the real world, constituting, too, its more significant aspects, but called out from it for the service of life.

This is the true point of view from which to ascertain both the merits and defects of the great theological tradition that has come down to us. Never in its saner moments did it venture to identify itself with the life of God in the world and in the church. Its saner moments became few and far between; but it would seem to be just to hold historic theology to those lucid intervals when the work of man knew itself as infinitely beneath the work of God. The study

of historic theology, in the mood into which it fell in evil days, of identifying certain propositions agreed to by a majority of the members of a council, sometimes from one class of motives and sometimes from another, is a discipline in disgrace. To be sure, here also the way of the cross is the way of light, and this *via dolorosa* must be covered. The higher mood, however, is that in which to find the meaning of historic theology. In reading Origen one sees an intellect confronting a real spiritual world, confessing its immeasurable magnitude, and girding up the loins of his mind that he may call attention to a number of its leading aspects. If we think of the long succession in this way, their work will have an abiding interest, and they will no longer arrest or mislead the Christian intellect.

The strength of Augustine is apparent when one thinks that for about fifteen hundred years he has supplied the categories to Christian thought. From Augustine to Nathaniel Taylor there are few fundamental differences in the leading theological tradition. The general mould in which thought was cast is the same. Predestination, depravity, atonement, regeneration, and perseverance in the life of the spirit are the common possession. The five points of Calvinism date from the five points of Augus-

tinianism, and they become the centres round which Puritan theological discussion both in Great Britain and in this country rages. It was a great achievement thus to indicate for fifteen centuries of Christian thought the points of high concern in the world of faith. There is no better way of discovering the essential contribution of any historic thinker than by asking what he had to say about the five points. To study him under the Augustinian categories is as sure a way as any to find his place in the succession and to estimate the value of his service. These five categories are the supremely significant aspects of the Christian world as it appeared to these historic thinkers. Their theologies are appreciations of reality; when studied as such they will be found worthy of the admiration in which they have been held, for order and for fruitful thought.

The sense of their merit is best seen from this point. Predestination is of fundamental importance. It expresses the sense of the supremacy of the Infinite will in relation to the finite will, and in relation to the universe. No category of thought could go deeper, none could be of higher moment. Depravity deals with the assertion of the finite will, in the individual and in the race, against the Infinite will. Here surely is an aspect of reality that cannot be

ignored. Atonement is the utterance, in the sacrificial career of Jesus Christ, of the Infinite will as the ground of reconciliation for man with himself and with the universe. Regeneration is the reinstatement in authority of the spiritual will in man. Perseverance stands for the optimism of the ancient creed. It is a declaration of the persistence and ultimate victory of the spiritual will. Thus the five categories are concerned with five vital and fundamental aspects of the world of faith. They are, one and all, a treatment of will, and an emphasis upon will as the core of reality. In predestination the Absolute will is the object of thought; in depravity the human will, individual and racial, receives attention; in atonement there is a return to the Absolute will as suffering love; in regeneration and in perseverance the will of man is again the point of concern. Philosophy has tended, for a century, to emphasize will in the universe and in man as the central reality. This profounder insight into the supremacy of will in the constitution of being is a new and permanent bond of sympathy between the ancient creed and the modern. The logical evolution of the Augustinian categories may well excite admiration. They are not isolated and vagrant insights into truth, fundamental but unrelated affirmations. The general theme is will;

the original position is the Infinite will; the movement from this is in the treatment of will, the will of man successively manifested against God as in depravity, in reconciliation to God on the basis of atonement as in regeneration, in the assurance of progress and eventual rest in God as in perseverance. This much can be said for the Augustinian categories, — they deal with fundamental reality, and they deal with it in a profoundly vital and orderly manner.

The traditional theology is, however, broken upon its own wheel. Its limitations and its positive errors clearly appear in the light of its own categories. Predestination expresses the relation of the Absolute will to the universe and to mankind. But the Absolute will is absolute in goodness; therefore the deduction that God is on the side of some men and against others is an illogical deduction. The derivation from this will of absolute goodness of two decrees, one of salvation for a certain portion of mankind, and another of reprobation for the rest of the human race, is a supreme instance of bad logic. Doth the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter? Can a good tree bring forth evil fruit, or a corrupt tree good fruit? The milder predestinationism is no better except in words. The reference to the Infinite will of an eternal passion to save a given number of souls, and of

complete indifference to the remainder, is the same logical error over again. It is another case of fundamental discrepancy between the premises and the conclusion. If predestination is to remain as an expression of the relation of the Divine will to all things and to all men, it must be cleared of its fatal historic inconsistencies. It must express the will that is never at war with itself, that is always and only on the side of every soul that it has made.

The same errors and limitations appear in the ancient creed in the treatment of the remaining categories. The truth upon which the old thinkers laid hold in their doctrine of depravity is greater than their vision of it; the human will, individual and racial, has emerged for new consideration. The old insights must be revised and absorbed in the larger knowledge and sounder vision of to-day. Atonement is not less but infinitely more than the historic discussions would seem to indicate. The need of reconciliation in man is universal. It is a human necessity; and reconciliation other than upon the basis of the good-will of God there can be none. The relation of the ideal ethical career of Jesus to the Absolute will waits for appreciation from those whom God has trained to see that the highest thing that can be said even about Christ is that in the magnitude of his being he was

completely dutiful. The plan of reconciliation is in the Absolute will; the method of its expression is in the complete and conscientious love of Jesus Christ; the manner of its operation is in the demonstration, through the apostolical succession of holy lives, of the Spirit. Regeneration tries to cover a truth with a metaphor. The truth here is altogether greater than its traditional symbol. The Spirit in man needs to be reinvested with authority; but it is alive even in disaster. The optimism of the ancient thought, expressed in the perseverance of the saints, is a pathetic optimism. We can trust God for greater things than that.

Another criticism that must be made upon the traditional creed, in the light of its own categories, has reference to its gnosticism. It claimed to know too much. It was not satisfied with the designation of the ethically perfect relation of God's will to mankind; it must work up a system of Divine decrees; and this system could be nothing other than the dismal reflection of its own mental limitation and its ethical immaturity. It was not satisfied with general views of the process of salvation; it went into detail, and elaborated an order that only omniscience could support. Thus over-confidence, vaulting ambition, touched with death the whole unreal structure. Thus, too, all the fascination

that goes with a modest order of great thoughts was lost, and the high poetry that is the soul of religion was rigidly excluded. There are few things more unreal than the swollen bodies of historic divinity, and few things less lovely. The old theological system encounters two fatal antagonists, — the sense of truth and the feeling for art.

Two conclusions would appear to follow from this review. Theology is a necessity of the religious intellect; for faith, categories, general affirmations, significant aspects of reality are inevitable. The theological toil of Christian history is in response to an irresistible impulse. The total world of faith is incomprehensible; it involves humanity, it includes the universe, it implicates the Deity. In the presence of this infinite world the Christian intellect awakes to power. The task that confronts it is overwhelming. Nothing can be done with this infinite world as infinite. Selection must be applied to it; its highest values must be found, called out, and set in an order by themselves. This is the motive, this is the achievement, of historic theology. It is pressed by the sense of the incommensurateness that exists between the whole reality and its own capacity to seek only the highest values; and its consciousness of the highest values is on record. That record

is historic theology. It is an achievement in answer to an impulse that cannot be denied.

But if this process of theology is inevitable, it is also inevitably incomplete. If it is certain that the Christian intellect must endeavor to discover and set in order the more significant aspects of faith, it is also certain that these aspects will grow upon thought into an ever greater order. The criticism that one is compelled to make upon traditional theology is the glory of the world of faith. It is a fundamental witness to its vastness, and to the growing sense of its preciousness. A new theology is essential to set forth the new values discovered in the Eternal gospel. The new categories of faith are affirmations of the larger meanings that have been found in faith. The sum of the reality is subject neither to addition nor subtraction; that is the work of God. But the significant appreciation of this unchangeable reality admits of wide variation. In fact it exists all the way from the vagrant insights of the apostolic fathers to the highest theological mind of the ancient and of the modern church. With an Infinite reality to study, it is evident that the process of significant appreciation can never be complete. Theological thought is therefore inevitable, and it is inevitably incomplete. The vocation of theology is to perfect her significant appreciations of

Christian reality, to carry them up into the complete comprehension of reality, to lift them into an image of the self-conscious intelligence that has become the equal of the process of God in the life of mankind. That is the ideal; and the pursuit of it makes every achievement provisional. We think in the interest of life; and when life calls for the revision, the expansion, or the expulsion of our thought, we should always be ready to answer that call.

IV

The scheme that is advanced in this book has several things that may be said for it. It is reasonably modest. It does not beg pardon for being, and it does not profess to understand all mysteries. It is at least founded upon a valid conception, the incommensurateness between Christian reality and Christian intelligence whose parallel is the incommensurateness between the material universe and science. Here the truth of God is held to be essentially independent and transcendent, and theology is a self-renewing order of less inadequate appreciations. The religion of Jesus is primarily a process in the instinctive reason of his disciples. This process is subject to the reflective reason, and yet it is too vast and subtle to be comprehended by it. The being of social man in the social God is the

aboriginal interest; and for the philosophic mind at this stage of development, this aboriginal interest as a whole is past finding out. We are greater than we know; and by this transcendent reality in being theology is forever allured and baffled. The task of theology has never been better defined than in the words of Paul, — "to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." [1]

The provisional scheme here advanced identifies theology with fundamental aspects of reality. Herein it seeks to revive the great tradition that has come down to us. The Greek theology, as summed up in Clement, in Origen, and in Athanasius, deals with supreme problems. In its five categories we have seen that Augustinianism is cardinal. Edwards is great because of his grasp upon fundamental aspects of the world of faith. In an era of rich and fascinating scholarship one needs to be recalled to this high tradition. The reformation of the Christian intellect in knowledge — that has been the object of scholarship for a generation. This object is not only worthy; it is also indispensable. But the reformation of the Christian intellect in historical and literary knowledge, while it makes possible the task of theology, leaves it unaccomplished. That task is the reorganization of the

[1] Ephesians iii. 19.

Christian intellect in thought. And this reorganization should be in fundamental thought. Theology should no longer permit its living interests to be swamped in the débris of unimportant detail. The greater aspects of faith should stand apart from the mass of minor things. Theology has, too often, been overwhelmed with artificial discussions. It has lost touch with reality and has aspired to become something on its own account. The demon of system has thus possessed it, and in this mood it has with prodigious labor and endless ingenuity spun itself into a world of wearisome and even monstrous detail. This demon must be cast out. Theology must be made to know that she is nothing for herself by herself; all that she is for herself she becomes through her service to life. And the vaster values of this life set in the life of God it is the business of theology to find and to put forth in order.

There is coherence among the conceptions outlined in this volume. The aspects of reality are significant, and they are graded up to the Supreme significance. The ideas discussed are in each case ultimate, and they constitute an ascending series terminating in the Absolute ultimate. Personality is viewed as the individual ultimate; it is the most significant aspect of the individual life. It is the last phase into which

the single human being can be resolved. Abolish this view, and the individual is nothing; conserve it, and a fruitful beginning for thought has been found. Humanity is regarded as the social ultimate. The reality of the individual calls for the definition of the whole to which he belongs. Is this in class or caste or nation or race, or in mankind? Optimism is advanced as the historical ultimate. Historical ultimate of one kind or another there must be. And it must be either optimism or pessimism. From what has been and from what is, it is open to anticipate what will be. Upon the basis of insight some things may, thus early in the historic process, be said in favor of optimism. Christ is the religious ultimate; he appears in the religious world as the supreme insight and love, the highest expression of the mind and heart of the Infinite in reference to man. The moral universe is the universal ultimate, and as the environment of the moral process in history it is of inexpressible moment. God is the Absolute ultimate, the ground of man's world, the life of it and the hope of it. Each of these ultimates faces an antagonist equally fundamental. It is personality against non-personality, humanity versus class and caste and endless divisions. The conflict is between the strong angel of optimism and the powerful demon of pessimism. Christ and anti-

christ are here in deadly combat. The conception of a moral universe has to meet and reckon with the counter conception of a universe indifferent to all conscience and love. Finally it is either theism or atheism. Pantheism and agnosticism and materialism are not fundamental. The question is not whether God is all in all, or whether God is knowable or unknowable, or whether God is material or spiritual in being. These questions are profoundly important, but they are not the most important. The ultimate demand is whether God is or is not. The final duel in the world of thought is between theism and atheism, and all other engagements and victories are to be esteemed important according to their bearing upon this last battle.

It may not be without interest to note that the order of this discussion when reversed gives the author's view as optimism founded upon the Divine intention. God is held as on the side of his universe; it is moral because he is in it. Christ is of infinite worth because he has God behind him. History is a sure campaign against practical atheism and inhumanity because God is in it. Humanity as one means social man in his fullness, and social man has his being in the social God. Personality is the capacity for rational sympathy and fellowship, and its reality is in the inspiration of the Infinite. God is for

mankind, from first to last, in this world and in all worlds. He cannot deny himself. This scheme stands for intentional universalism on the part of God. It is the will of God that all men should be saved; that is his purpose, for that his gracious power is organized in life and in history, for that he works, and for that he must always work. But a consistent scheme is not the same thing as reality; intentional universalism is not universalism in fact. The battle is on, and God has organized his grace for absolute victory; but the issues are still undetermined, and those who hope in God are worse than triflers, they are blasphemers, unless they fight under his banner, unless they strive to win the enemy over to the Divine side.

CHAPTER IV

THE INDIVIDUAL ULTIMATE: PERSONALITY

I

THE late master of Baliol, Benjamin Jowett, writes of a Mr. Ward, a minor person in the Oxford Movement: "He was the best arguer from given premises that I have ever known. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that he spent the greater part of the day in arguing."[1] Carlyle remarks of Lord Jeffrey that he was so swift and adroit in argument that there was no hope of being able to meet him except with greater depth of insight. The same author says of John Sterling that he could argue victoriously against a half dozen disputants at once, and in the context we are told that this victorious debater was properly no thinker at all. Dialectical skill should imply intellectual power, but unfortunately it does not always imply it. It is a trick easily learned, and when associated with high self-esteem, strongly developed polemic instincts, slight intellectual integrity, a shallow mind is capable of making a great display by

[1] *Sermons Biographical and Miscellaneous*, p. 137.

means of it. Ward and Jeffrey and Sterling were doubtless honest men; but their mental dexterity was joined to an unmistakable superficiality. They are types of the degeneration to which the dialectical spirit is apt to fall. They remind one of a class of men with whom they have little else in common, the popular negative thinkers who have so widely engaged modern attention. With the single exception of Hume, they are strikingly wanting in depth. Montaigne, Voltaire, Huxley, John Stuart Mill even, and other kindred writers do not get at the heart of the matter. The mood to which reference is made is acute, adroit, persistent, belligerent; but it is wanting in deep prevailing insight. English empericism from Hume onward, and French sensationalism from the time of Locke, are reflected in the works of a great number of popular writers. They are an attack upon the personality of man. Descartes had said, "I think, therefore I am;" that is, he had found in thought the complete assurance of personal reality. This is the fortress which is continually assailed by the school of thought that regards the great French thinker as an antagonist. The vindication of human personality is the counter and greater tradition of modern philosophy. It is certain that we should not be in our present clear and sure possession of this fundamental

truth but for the adroit, persistent, and confident attack of negative opinion. So much must be put to its credit.

Hume writes: "I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception."[1] How could Hume catch himself when he was trying to catch something else? He looked in sensations for himself, but he was not a sensation, an impression. He looked for himself among the faint images of impressions, among his ideas, but he was not an idea. And because he could see no impression or idea that was himself he concluded that he himself was a fiction. And so it comes to pass that Hume looking for himself means impression looking for itself and idea looking for itself. Thus it turns out that instead of one person trying to catch himself we have a whole mindful of personalized impressions and ideas trying to catch themselves. The excellent thing about this hunt of Hume after an ego abstracted from all mental life, and his confession of failure, is that it opens up to the heart the whole subject of human personality.

One of the three grand characteristics of Buddhism is thus defined: "Whether Buddhas arise, O priests, or whether Buddhas do not arise, it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary

[1] *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Book I. p. 252.

constitution of being, that all its elements are lacking in an ego; this fact a Buddha discovers and masters, and when he has discovered and mastered it, he announces, teaches, publishes, proclaims, discloses, minutely explains, and makes it clear that all the elements of being are lacking in an ego."[1] This is one of the best conundrums ever invented. How a universe wholly plural should be able to discover that it was not a universe at all; how a non-personal Buddha should be able to discover and master the fact of universal non-personality; how he should be able to announce and teach and minutely explain it to a multitude of non-personal beings like himself, would seem to be the superlative marvel. The supposition is that there is no ego anywhere. Now that might be the inconceivable fact. The puzzle is how it could be discovered. How could ideas of unity and permanence arise in the absence of all unity and all permanence? It is like asking a dead man to write his own obituary, insert it in the daily newspaper, call the attention of his friends to the fact that he is no longer living, and to minutely explain it. One contemplates this third grand characteristic of Buddhism with the same ineffable wonder with which the Western farmer looked upon the calf's tail sign over the

[1] Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism*, p. xiv.

tannery. His exclamation was, "How did the calf get through the hole in which the tail stuck!" On pondering this third axiom of Buddhism one exclaims, How did the ego escape through the hole in which the knowledge of its escape was caught! Nothing is more humorous than the unconscious contradictions of earnest thought, and nothing could be a better introduction to the fresh treatment of any part of reality. The helpless and ludicrous mass of contradictions into which Buddhism is brought by the denial of the ego is profoundly interesting. It shows the folly of man's attempt to suppress man while endeavoring to do the work of man. It demonstrates that every abolition of personality is but a new assertion of it.

The definition of personality cannot be complete, on account of what Tennyson calls its abysmal depths. Definition is delimitation, but no one can set bounds to the soul. Definition is the synthesis of salient features, of significant aspects; and in the case of the human spirit, this must always remain provisional. No man can comprehend himself; hence exhaustive definition is impossible. Personality is found to be the centre of contrary determinations, and this adds to the difficulty of definite thinking upon the subject. The one and the many, the unique and the general, the incommunicable and

the free sympathies, the sacred reservation of individuality and the equally sacred communion of soul with soul, are gathered in the reality of personal being. A further difficulty is owing to the fact noticed by Coleridge, who remarks that Noah's ark affords a fine image of the world at large, as containing a very few men and a great number of beasts. The profounder aspect of personality is moral personality; and this requires for its proper accentuation moral life. As the permanent streams are reduced by drought to mere shadows of themselves, so in the destitution of moral experience the abiding fact of moral being wastes to a line. Perhaps it may serve as a provisional statement of personality if we say that it denotes the abiding and unique reality of the single human being. The meaning of this statement will appear in the discussion that is to follow.

II

The unique and abiding reality of the single human mind is revealed in the process of knowledge and in the force of character. Epistemology, or the science of knowledge, and ethics, or the science of character, guide one to the vision of the selfhood which is the ultimate reality in the individual mind. Thorough insight into the methods of knowledge would seem to

result inevitably in the assurance of an ego. Here Kant's work is fundamental; it is, besides, a step toward finality. Thorough insight into the process of conscience would appear to lead to the same conclusion. Here Butler's work is of permanent significance. Kant finds the ego necessary to knowledge, Butler finds it necessary to character. Behind mental and moral life, according to the German thinker, is the constructing person; behind the process of the conscience, according to the British thinker, there is the accountable self. Butler and Kant stand for great beginnings; the work done by both is solid and enduring. Both are guides to the profounder and surer sense of the unique and abiding reality of the individual mind.

Personality reveals itself through the combining or unifying function of mind. Man is indeed a series of states, but he is more. He is these in combination, woven into the one fabric of experience. There is in mind a flying shuttle; it is threaded through the senses. Thus threaded with sights and sounds, with sensations of taste and smell and touch, it goes on its swift and marvelous service. It weaves the web of experience according to its own design. Sensations are no more knowledge than threads are cloth. Weaving turns the threads into cloth; combination, according to a given plan, turns

sensations into knowledge. The Inferno, the Purgatorio, the Paradiso are names for the successive moods of the man Dante; and speaking in a general way they are signs for the successive experiences of genuine men in all the centuries. But the "Divine Comedy" is a whole, and the isolated moods of its author are not isolated at all; they are parts in one great human consciousness. The poet Burns is a succession of states. A new feeling for nature rises in his heart almost every day. He is in love with at least fifty different persons, from Highland Mary to Jane Armour. He is occasionally intoxicated; but for the most part he is industrious, generous, independent, brave. His life is like the fitful weather of his country — sunshine and rain, the clouds heavy and dull or storm-driven and the deep blue sky, the glory and the gloom of nature in all degrees swiftly alternating. This strange succession of moods, both mixed and contrasted, sweeping onward like shadows over the cornfields, is the substance of the mind of Burns, as it is the substance of the mind of man. But the mind itself, the principle that holds the vast and varied and fleeting succession through perception and memory and imagination and reason, and that builds its moods into one human experience, must be added. Without that principle of combination and unification Burns is not,

man is not. That knowledge is an organization of the many into the one is nearly incapable of doubt to any person who has the least metaphysical insight. Man is a conservative being. He carries upon him the marks of descent from the first man, who is of the earth earthy, and from the second man, who is the Lord from heaven. Conservation is a law illustrated in his physical organism, in his mental type, in his amenableness to influence, in the process of vital education to which he is subject; it is further illustrated in perception, memory, imagination, reason, character. Through the activity of all these powers the tendency of the mind is to keep that which has been committed to it. This principle of conservation, of unification of the isolated and fleeting in mental life into a permanent whole, is but an aspect of the ultimate, indivisible human soul.

The alternative to this would be the automatic view of mind. That mental life involves unification no one would deny; the question would be in what way, and by what means, it comes about. Sensations group themselves; memories are these sensations over again, only fainter; imaginations are the endless quadrilles and evolutions of the sensational content; reason is but the customary combinations of sensations and memories and hopes. The whole thing

is automatic. Knowledge is the customary and inevitable society among Hume's impressions and ideas. Knowledge is society, but it is purely mechanical society. This is the miracle in which we are landed by the refusal to believe in the clear sense of personality. The result is a countless multitude of personalities. All sensations, all memories, all the members of the mental content, are endowed with the attribute of personality. Like a well-drilled army, they go through their evolutions, with here and there a shout from Fate, the general who conducts the review. For the substantiation of the man we are asked to accept the substantiation of the uncounted elements that make up the mental whole. This is the Arabian Nights of psychology, the new Wonderland where the simplest thing becomes incredible, and where the impossible is the real.

Unification is a conscious function. Habits are made, and therefore are witnesses to the conscious combinations, often enough prolonged and severe, out of which they rose. Seeing, hearing, all the senses, imply a process of reading. There is a grammar of sense; it has alphabet, words, parts of speech, rules of syntax; and the labor involved in the act by which the child makes out an object through sight or touch, or through all the senses together, is at

first immense. The automatic action of the mind has behind it a history of conscious and painful origination. The useful spontaneities of man are largely the returns to labor. Even in a trained mind the directing intelligence can never safely be discharged. Thinking by association, and not by insight, is the humorous aspect of intellectual life. Into this mental action by mere association, every thinker is in danger of falling. A shrewd observer watching a preacher who had ceased to move by the force of rational vision, and who was hurried hither and thither by chance thoughts, thus describes him: "He reminds me of a foolish dog I once heard of that was in pursuit of a deer, but coming to a place where a fox had crossed the track, he left the deer and ran after the fox. He had not followed the fox far before he arrived at a spot where a rabbit had crossed. Forthwith he leaves the fox and pursues the rabbit; but when the hunter came up he had left the rabbit and was barking at a mouse-hole." Mere associational thinking can never be sure of attaining its end. The probabilities are that the grand primary quest, the deer, will be given up for the secondary interests that cross the mind's path. Lift from the trained mind even the power of conscious self-direction, and the end will be "barking at a mouse-hole."

In character this is obvious. Men do not become what they are by chance. The soul becomes a bad habit or a good, a spontaneity for shame or for honor, only as the issue of deliberate, forced, sustained drill. For the normal human being the labor involved in attaining facility in wickedness is great. The adept in evil device and in unscrupulous action represents a history of conscious effort that is prodigious. Headlong automatic force is an acquisition through long and laborious toil. It is in the nature of wages. In this sense the way of the transgressor is hard, and Plato is right in pointing to extreme wickedness as a sign of the vitality and power of the soul.[1] The perfected habits of virtue and vice are ideals toward which the best men and the worst make only distant approximations; moral excellence in the soul is never self-sustaining; and wickedness is never without effort. Even if this were so it would not follow that man is an automaton. The devil as the symbol of perfected evil habit is not thereby reduced to a mere machine. If the diabolic life is a machine, the spirit in the wheels is the moving power. God as the absolute habit of love must forever renew the divine organism of his character by the presence of ineffable will. Still in the mystery of human life the sense of

[1] *Republic*, Book X. 610.

effort that underlies the mental character of the race is a welcome witness to the fact that unification is a conscious function.

Personality attests itself not only through the function of unification but also through the fact of judgment. The moods are united in one experience, and the judgment is passed upon its worth or its worthlessness. The confessional literature of the world is one great witness to this personal judgment upon life. The penitential psalms, Babylonian and Hebrew, the authentic records of the spiritual life of mankind, ancient and modern, reveal man sitting in judgment upon himself. The ideal is always a judge, first of the life that is, and then of the life that should be. Ye shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. That is the great legislative enactment of the kingdom of God; its application to the individual citizen in that kingdom is a judicial process. The Christian is first a provisional legislator for himself; he lays the whole life, all its isolated states, under one law. By that moral law he combines, consolidates, unites. He is, in the second place, a provisional judge of himself. He interprets the law, and applies it in the ascertainment of the worth or the worthlessness of his life. The publican with his head in the dust crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and Luther at the Diet of

Worms declaring, "Here I stand, I can do no other; God help me, amen," are both under self-legislation and self-judgment; in both, and by a double testimony, the reality of personality is attested.

The fact of moral judgment cannot indeed be denied, but it may be explained away. It may be resolved into the feeling of attraction or repulsion that goes with certain other groups of feelings. The bird sheds its plumage every year; the old feathers go because they are pushed from their places, sentence is passed upon them, judgment is decreed against them. Thus moods are displaced by moods, and what seems the force of moral judgment is but the action of repulsion in the succession of mental states. But in reply it may be said that even here the permanence of the bird is assumed, and while it has no power over its successive coats of many colors, it may conceivably have an opinion about their relative merits. In all mental succession a subject is assumed, and even when it is claimed that the subject is without power over the succession, it is clear the judgment upon its character is real. Associational psychology has gone deeply into the feeling and imagination of the Anglo-American mind. It must be treated as it is, a huge superstition. It is the-swarm-of-bees theory of the human mind. The hive is

the bodily organism and the bees are the mental content, and they tumble in and out in ceaseless mystery. The only unity is the hive; the only law is the instinct by which the swarm somehow holds together. Against the principle that unites life into one experience, and that holds that experience before itself for judgment, the literature of Humian psychology is to be classed in the department of humor.

Personality reveals itself in the force of character. Character is the habit of acting in a given way; and this tendency toward action of a given type expresses personal reality. Men are seen to be men most clearly because they bring things to pass. Professor Andrew Seth has well remarked that the maxim for to-day is not Descartes's famous *Cogito ergo sum*, but *Ago ergo sum*.[1] As a New England preacher once said, "We have too many resolutions and too little action. The Acts of the Apostles is the title of one of the books of the New Testament; their resolutions have not reached us." Apostolic reality is finally assured through apostolic achievement. In the sense that thought and feeling are subservient to will, Christianity is the religion of achievement. Greater than the Sermon on the Mount is the Temptation, higher than the assurance of spirit given in the para-

[1] *Man's Place in the Cosmos*, p. 128.

bles is that given in the cure of disease, in the removal of insanity, in moving sinners to repentance, in creating in a Zacchæus the love of righteousness, in educating the twelve. The church is profoundly right in holding that the agony in the Garden and the sovereignty of self there maintained, the arrest, the trial, and the mockery, and the sublime demeanor under them constitute an ascending series of disclosures of the heart of Christ. The church is right in holding that the supreme revelation of Christ is upon the cross. The alternatives by which Jesus was confronted were desertion of his cause or crucifixion for it. Moral supremacy is, therefore, given in the crucifixion.

To return to the discussion upon a lower level, it may be said that thinking is not so sure a witness for the reality of the soul as action. Fichte must be added to Descartes. "The Vocation of Man" is the record of a great spirit bent upon the certain assurance of itself. In the first book of that remarkable work the writer describes himself as the pupil of Spinoza. Necessity governs him; in body and in mind he is but the expression of the universal forces of extension and thought. He has no life of his own; he is only as the mode of another being. The second book discovers Fichte as the disciple of Kant. Mind is essentially active; thought rebels

against the domination of the material world; it is free, and knowledge is an edifice built according to the plan of the mind and by its own hands. But the doubt returns that perhaps this mental world is only a subjective dream, with no valid relation to the universe, and no reality for itself. From this doubt the philosopher frees himself in the third book. Here is indicated the ultimate vocation of man. He is finally a doer, and in this vocation he sets agoing within himself, and in the universe beyond him, all the bells of reality. Henceforth he lives in the sense and inspiration of their music. The last assurance of personal being and universal reality is through action. In bringing things to pass man discovers himself; in struggling to bring righteousness to pass he is forever under the power of the psalm of truth.

The unifying, judging, and creative functions of the human mind will continue to attest to the unsophisticated intelligence the personal reality of man. A single analogous case may not be superfluous in this summary. The United States is one nation because there is for all the states one ultimate law, one final judge of that law, one chief executive. Congress legislates for all the states; the supreme court interprets that law for all the states, and judges them in their relations to it; and the President sees

that the judicial opinion is brought to pass in the life of the people. The states are one nation because they are united by legislative enactment, judicial process, and executive power. The states are one because they are under a government whose reality is attested by one legal intellect, one legal conscience, and one legal will for all the people. Analogously, one out of many is the primary account of the human mind. Judgment upon the character of the whole thus achieved is the second fact, the application of a law of righteousness either in approval or in disapproval. And the third and crowning phenomenon is the power that brings things to pass. The legislative, the judicial, and the executive functions of the mind are the three great witnesses for the personal reality of man.

III

There are certain large and commanding expressions of the human mind that shed light upon personality. The maxim would appear to be valid that the creator is known by the creation. The axiom holds in the intellectual no less than in the physical and in the moral world. By their fruits ye shall know them. From nothing can come nothing. The stream cannot rise higher than the fountain. It is impossible for one to give that which one does not

possess. In the strength of these fundamental discriminations of thought, wherever one finds a work of art, something expressive of order, unity, and beauty, one is bound to lodge the sense of these things in the soul of the artist. The Parthenon is great in itself; it is also great as an expression of the mind of Phidias. The high mental expression is preceded by the high mental power.

Science is from this point of view an expression of man's personality. It is hard to believe that the mind could find order outside and beyond itself if it were unable to find order within itself. The fact is that there is no outside beyond man. Nature is more than the mind of man, yet it is full of the mind of man. Nature exists for man as an organization through the senses, and in accordance with the laws of thought. Nature is not color; that is in the human eye. It is not sound; that is in the human ear. It is neither smell nor taste; these are in human sensibility. It is not hardness nor softness, cold nor heat, rigidity nor elasticity; these are the product of the human organism in relation to nature. What is nature? It affects and feeds the senses; it is in constant and influential relation to the mind; it is, therefore, real. But what is the reality? We cannot be sure that it is anything other than force or will. And we

could never know this were it not for the consciousness of force or will that each one knows as himself. Schopenhauer's phrase, "the objectification of will," seems to me to cover the case. Casting about for an explanation of the ceaseless attack which nature makes upon the human mind through the senses, the best possible appears to be that nature is will. Nature behaves like will, and on this ground it is believed to be will; and this conclusion means simply the justifiable objectification of will. So far man's knowledge of nature is an expression of his knowledge of himself.

But will and intellect are in an inseparable association in man, and therefore man proceeds further in his reading of nature. Sensations come to him in orderly sequences. In this way he reaches what he calls natural law. Neither time nor tide waits for any man. The succession of day and night is invariable; the procession of the seasons cannot be arrested. Fire burns, water drowns, the summer sun scorches, and the winter atmosphere freezes. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap — barley from barley, wheat from wheat, tares from tares. The oak, the maple, the birch, the walnut tree, each reproduces itself and not another. Everywhere from like causes flow like effects. The elements of the world are indestructible,

and the laws of their combination are discovered and not invented by the chemist. Face to face with nature one soon discovers that one is in the presence of an independent and inviolable order. But this beholding of order through the senses is but the justifiable objectification of intellect. When we say that the world is force we are reading the attack which it makes upon the senses through conscious will; when we say that the world is an order, a system of forces, we are construing its meaning through intelligent will. Historically the sense of ethical law precedes the discovery of natural law. We are told that Aristotle's natural science is wild; we know that his ethical science is immortal. As far as it goes his logic is a marvel of rational order; his physics are only preserved because they are his. This is simply a striking instance of a universal law. Stoic ethics are of permanent value; stoic physics are valueless. The sense of mental and moral order in its supreme form is as old as the Founder of Christianity. And this precedence of the inward over the outward is of inexpressible moment. It is the sure sign that we do not read the natural order into the spiritual; but that having found the spiritual order, at a much later stage of experience, we are able to construe in its light the natural order. Early in history there comes the con-

sciousness of an order in human life that man did not make and that he cannot unmake. The laws that govern the health of the body, the continuance of man upon the earth, the due training, the ever wider information, and the rational expression of the intellect, and the development of just character, are independent of volition. They are in the nature of man. Social well-being is in the keeping of an irrevocable necessity. Right action and wrong, sane methods of living and insane, are in each case followed by irreversible consequences. No man can serve two masters. The laws of life are above and beyond volition. We may choose our path, but the choice once made the consequence is inevitable. Ethnic eschatologies are simply a legendary presentation of the absoluteness of moral law. The way into the abyss will never lead to the heights; the conduct that is an outrage upon the individual life and an insult to society is perdition. We cannot stay the planet in its flight, arrest or change the ongoing stars, reverse the tide before its time, invert the seasons, or roll back the river upon its source; and we are led to perceive and understand this physical impossibility because of the earlier sense of the moral impossibility of overthrowing or altering the laws that govern human life. In the light of the order within, man is able to note and understand the order without.

But science runs into a philosophy of nature. The assumption is that nature is one; she is a universe. And this thought, which has taken possession to-day of almost every one who thinks, is but the full objectification of man in nature. Will is but an aspect of human life; intelligence and will together do not exhaust man. He is unity in multiplicity, a permanent spirit in a world of change, a self-identical being in a wide experience of diversity. In this unity will and intellect and feeling live; they are aspects of this unity, they do not exhaust it. And thus possessed as man is with the sense of force and order and unity he goes to the serious study of nature. It too is force and order and still more. Nature is one; it is a universe. It is simply self-stultification to assert that our scientific view of nature is other than the expression of human personality. Science as the organized knowledge of the force and law and unity of the material world is an impressive witness to the personal spirit of man.

Art is another witness. It is a creation expressive of the spiritual life. Its greater notes are order, freedom, beauty, unity. In the best music, painting, poetry, building, and sculpture, man is the being that he fails to be in the actual world. The ideal creation is an expression of the person who would live an ideal existence.

Art is ideal beauty, as ethics is ideal right; each is a symbol of the personal spirit. And it is inconceivable that a great artistic whole should come out of a life that was in no sense a whole in itself. Art is but the shadow of man; and in its freedom and unity it is a witness to his freedom and unity.

We inevitably seek personal centres for the best influences of the world. What are called the humanities, the wisdom and sentiment of the race as expressed especially in literature and history, centre in great personalities, and they could have no conceivable interest for a being in the image of the Humian psychology.

The true reading of the world's best books and its great lives is a re-creation of the past. Language is but a symbol; the vast vital content of the symbol is appreciable only through creative imagination. The wisdom of the race is wrought out through the personal history of leading men; and not until it is ideally replaced in the consciousness from which it came is it understood. In all high literature the authors are benefactors; they are lifted into an ideal world, they constitute an invisible commonwealth. They are the cloud of witnesses that encompass the noble struggle of the world. The higher criticism has its rights; it must protest against the tendency to believe a literary lie. But it is still the ser-

vant of imagination. Make it clear that Homer did not write the Iliad and Odyssey, that there are two or three Isaiahs instead of one, that there are no incontestably Davidic psalms, that Moses has no claim to the authorship of the ninetieth, the sublimest and most mournful of all the psalms, and you simply impose a new duty upon the creative imagination. The spiritual wisdom of the race cannot remain in the air. Without name it may be, but not without source in human souls. It is the human value of history that lends it an everlasting charm. And the result of the most destructive criticism is but the opening up of a fresh opportunity for the substantiation of wisdom and beauty and heroism and hope in sublime personalities. Under a philosophic sense of the force of personality in the world, and through adequate learning, this new creation of the imagination will at least serve as a symbol of the truth. The patriarchs will live in spite of criticism; the rich legends of Genesis will continue as types of the personal origins of human history. The modified Adam will shape evolution; it will be the horse and he the rider. Thus persistent, invincible, and rationally valid is the human instinct for personality.

Human personality is the condition of human society. Human society is an organization in

moral reason. The functions of personality in knowledge and in judgment and in action extend themselves in society. Personality stands for two things, the uniqueness of the individual and his universality. The uniqueness marks his reality so that he does not blend in the social mass as the drop does in the ocean. The universality is his power of rational sympathy, the faculty by which he is able to share the thought, the passion, and the purpose of the widest and noblest social whole. The genuine human home, as opposed to the pairing of birds or the cohabitation of animals, is an institution through personality; the inviolable reality of the man and the woman, and the power of reciprocity in thought and love and service, are essential assumptions. Through instinct the human home is an institution of moral persons. Nowhere are the sacredness and the mutuality of personality, its uniqueness and its universality, so clearly seen as here. The family, the industrial order, the nation, and the community of the race, so far as they are not brutal but human, are based upon personality.

It is needless to say that personality in its twofoldness of uniqueness and universality is essential to religion. The Infinite as personal has alone interest for man; nothing else can mean anything to man. The Eternal must mean an Absolute experience to whose perfection the ex-

perience of a good man bears some likeness. The aboriginal assumption of intelligent religion is the personality of God, his uniqueness and absolute universality; and of that life men avail themselves by the corresponding power of personality. Mutuality in thought, in love, in purpose, and in activity is possible between God and man on the ground that in the infinity of their unlikeness they are still essentially akin. Job's utterance, which is by common consent regarded as the supreme expression of the religious spirit, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him," is but the spoken confidence of a real lover in the reality of the Eternal Beloved. All swamping of man in God, all reduction of the soul to a mode of the Infinite, to the bubble on the ocean, all exclamations that "he who truly loves God must not desire that God should love him in return," are pathological. Religion as worship, as trust, and as service is from one real being to the reality of the Supreme Being. Through the attributes of distinction and community God and man unite; God with man through Infinite tenderness and help, man with God through homage and trust and obedience.

More, perhaps, than any one thing personality means distinction from the universe and conscious involvement with it. Here is the core of the matter, it seems to me, in the notes of per-

manent distinction and of conscious sympathy. The two aspects of personality may, perhaps, be expressed in the single phrase "conscious involvement with the universe." Everything is of course related to everything else; as Emerson used to say, "strike the rock with your hammer and the jar is felt in Jupiter." Animal life is included in this complete circuit of being. Every creature that has life is related to the living whole. But when we ascend to man we come upon something besides the fact of universal relationship. Man is related to nature, to human society, to the Infinite, and he knows it. This involvement with the universe reflected in consciousness and made distinctive and serious is the chief characteristic of man. To trace the conscious involvement of man with the universe is to trace the meaning of his life, is to expound its reality.

This consciousness makes the involvement new in character. It is no longer an involvement as of one thing with all things in a mechanical order; nor is it the relation of one being to another in a mere vital order. It is the involution of consciousness with consciousness, of spirit with spirit in the order of the Absolute spirit. Things are ordered by attraction and repulsion, and they know it not; animals are ordered by desire and aversion, and they pay

no heed to it; men are ordered by moral need and hope, and their consciousness of moral need and hope is their life. The German mystic is right in his discrimination of man's world from that of the animal, — "The element of the fish is the sea, the element of the bird is the air, the element of the soul is God." At best the highest animal life can do no more than come to the borders of man's world and look up into it in utter blankness of vision, as certain inhabitants of the sea come to the surface and look up into the sky. And the porpoise may be held to understand modern astronomy when it is said truly that the animal has the least rational appreciation of man's distinctive world. Man lives and moves and has his being in God; that is, his distinctive life is conscious involvement with the universe.

This consciousness may put on either of two forms. It may be the consciousness of the violation of this high relation, as in the case of the psalmist when he cries, —

> "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
> And done that which is evil in thy sight."[1]

The outrage committed upon human life is felt to be an insult offered to the Infinite life. The sense of sin is the assertion of a calamitous consciousness, and the calamity lies in the disavowal

[1] Psalm li. 4.

of righteousness. The mood of repentance is a transitional one — the dissolution of an evil consciousness toward God into a good consciousness toward him. Or it may be the consciousness of ethical identity with God, as in the case of Christ, "I and my Father are one." Judas and Jesus present the ideals for these two contrasted consciousnesses in which men live. At the lowest extreme is the spirit that confesses its treason against the Infinite, at the highest extreme is the Master whose soul is at one with the rhythm of eternal love. In the consciousness of involvement with the Infinite, and between these two extremes of despair and ecstasy, men live. This is their world; these are its extremes.

We come here within sight of a reasonable faith in immortality. Every soul has the permanent distinction of conscious involvement with God. Personality is exclusive only under one aspect; under another aspect it is the great organ of inclusiveness. The exclusiveness is only in order to secure its essential reality; the function of that reality is sympathy, the pervasive power of the spirit, the communion through which brotherhood is realized and by which men are perfected in the life of God. The mutualism of humanity is thus expressed by the apostle: "Ye are in our hearts to die together and live together."[1] The mutualism of God and re-

[1] 2 Corinthians vii. 3.

deemed man is thus set forth: "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." [1] And as Emerson sings, —

> "'T is not within the force of fate
> The fate-conjoined to separate."

The tree is yearly denuded of its leaves, but while the tree lasts the structure remains; the universe has an immense range of transient expression, but the spiritual organism of the universe in God and in man would seem to be forever. This reciprocity between God and man, whether in terms of love, as in the case of all the holy, or in terms of discipline, as with all defiant souls, would appear to authenticate the immortality of man. In his sin, man stands before God as judge; the unholy life and the supremely holy are interlocked through conscience. There would appear to be no end of this reciprocity in terms of retribution and discipline save by the conversion of the offending soul. What once interlocks with the Divine conscience must surely remain interlocked. The chain may be transformed from moral suffering to moral joy, but it cannot be broken. What is morally worth while for God once is morally worth while forever. He is not a man, that he should repent. And if this must be so with wicked persons, it is clear that it must be so

[1] Ephesians ii. 22.

with those who love God. The mutualism of this love means the soul's hold upon God and God's hold upon the soul.

Personality, therefore, is the fundamental assurance of immortality. In virtue of it man is real, and on account of it he shares in the best life of the race and enters into and lays hold of the life of God. The growth of the individual in knowledge and in character means the increase of his grasp upon the total achievement of mankind, the larger reproduction in himself of the higher moods of the race, the sympathetic ownership of the spiritual possessions of humanity. Personality is this spirit of pervasiveness and fellowship in knowledge, in duty, and in hope. Learning is possible only through personality; and on account of the same fact it is possible for man to partake of the life of God. The world of human achievement is here, and God is in it and above it; and the capacity to pervade and possess more and more widely that world, and to rise evermore into a vaster sense of the Transcendent goodness, is perhaps the deepest thing in the human soul. On account of it the soul lays hold upon the highest in history and in the universe, and in virtue of it the highest in history and the universe lays hold upon the soul. In and through this profound and serious reciprocity of spiritual being, one

can hear from the Creative heart the assurance, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

"Till Death us join,
O voice yet more Divine!
That to the broken heart breathes hope sublime;
Through lonely hours
And shattered powers
We still are one, despite of change and time.

"Death, with his healing hand,
Shall once more knit the band,
Which needs but that one link which none may sever;
Till through the Only Good,
Heard, felt, and understood,
Our life in God shall make us one forever."

IV

The capacity for expanding conscious involvement in the best life of the universe, just noted, leads to the general remark that personality is a real capacity rather than a completely developed consciousness. It is a native and enduring capacity whose realization is the ideal of existence. Such as it is, human experience is but an approximation to unity; besides, this experience under adverse moral judgment is subject to disintegration. It must be broken up and pass away, if the man is ever to come to himself. Perverse realizations of this high capacity are the central tragedy of life, and the thing that man knows least about is often his own soul. The ideal of personality is given in the great

words, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect;"[1] and again, in the terms of Christ's prayer, "that they may be one even as we are."[2] That is, experience must be of the true type, and it must complete itself through the vision of the Absolute experience. From this ideal, men are far away. The categories of thought are incompletely applied to the world in knowledge, and knowledge is at best ill-organized. The moral ideal is still little more than a light upon the wild deep of human passion, and the noblest characters in the world are torn with contradictions. The will of man is far from being a will wholly for righteousness; and where it is firmly set in the resolve to bring to pass the highest things, it is only a ship leaving port, headed indeed homeward, but with uncounted leagues of stormy sea intervening. Man is enough of a person to see in God the Absolute person, and to find in God the progressive realization of his own human personality. Capacities and ideals are the last and best description of human existence. The discriminating instinct in sense, the organizing instinct in intellect, the appreciation of moral values in conscience, the aptitude for selection and action in the will, and the capacity for the unity of truth and of love in the soul, bring one close to

[1] Matthew v. 48. [2] John xvii. 12.

the reality of the human mind. Everywhere that mind is a genuine capacity matched with a sublime ideal. If we look for complete realizations, we shall hardly find ourselves; if we fasten upon capacities and ideals, we shall be unable to miss ourselves; and in the presence of the profoundest capacity, — the capacity for true selfhood, and face to face with the sublimest ideal, — the ideal of a selfhood in the full image of God, we shall know that we have made the great primal discovery.

To appeal to this capacity, in the strength of the personality of Christ, is the high privilege of the preacher. Christ is the force by which this capacity becomes conscious of itself, the force by which this conscious capacity is heightened. It must never be forgotten that profound moral experience is essential to the due discovery of the personal soul. In the brutal civilizations of antiquity men were little more than things. Prior to the era of the prophets there was little sense of personality among the people of Israel. The social moralism of the prophets was, in a way, premature. It presupposed, what had not yet been distinctly discovered, the personal soul of the individual man. The experiences of great souls like Isaiah and Jeremiah did much to educate men in the true direction. But not until we hear Jesus preaching by the sea of Galilee

and on the hillsides of Judæa do we witness the message that brings man to the consciousness of himself. The divine soul of Jesus wrought within men the sense of soul. Here Christianity is unique in human history. It opened at men's feet infinite abysses; it showed overhead infinite heights. It led men into the consciousness of moral evil, and into the sense of moral good with a power that made the soul an awful surprise to itself. Nothing is sublimer in the annals of mankind than this sudden accentuation of personality through the power of a tremendous moral experience. Men like Paul and Augustine and Luther and Edwards repeat in themselves the aboriginal spiritual surprise. The Prodigal Son is man in the process of a powerful moral experience. The conscious abuse of existence, the want, the shame, the horror of it; the possibility of recovering the lost grace, of returning to the original integrity, issue in a sense of personality that nothing can shake. "I have sinned;" "I will arise and go to my Father;" when words like these are the serious utterance of the soul, it is plain that the man has come to himself. To make men see that the moral life in every soul sinks into an Inferno, rises into a Purgatorio, and is overhung by a Paradiso, is the vocation of the preacher. He finds men moving in worlds not realized; there are depths of moral suffering, heights of moral discipline,

and distant regions of moral peace of which they must be made aware. And through this process of heightened moral experience the personal spirit will steadily rise before him into the distincter and surer consciousness of self.

Personality is the word for the reality of the individual human life. Whether one can give an adequate account of that reality to the reason or not, one must insist upon it. Human life ebbs and flows, contracts and expands, is now more and now less; it is a history of mutation and of difference. Still within this uncertain circle there is somewhere a permanent centre. The sense of a real, abiding, self-identical life is the final fact in consciousness. Personality is, therefore, the ultimate truth of the individual human being; it is the one fixed point that looks on tempests and is never shaken. It is the necessary presupposition of all knowledge, all moral judgment and feeling, all moral achievement and character. It is the attestation of the reality of man. In the races that like the Hindu are chiefly meditative and receptive, the sense of personality is weakest; in peoples that like the Anglo-American are marked by creative and governing instincts the consciousness of it is strongest. It is like the rock in the river; it is always there, and in the normal flow always visible; but under the freshet it is covered up, and then it is known only by the roar of the

stream over it. This freshet is one of the features of modern life. The frequency and the severity of it is the main reason for this discussion of what would appear to be the most incontestible of all human certainties. Under an incessant invasion of superstitions from the world of learning, fads scientific and social, and the swift incoming tide of incompatible interests, man is in danger of losing himself in a completely unbiblical sense. The quest of the ancient Diogenes was for a man; the search of the modern Diogenes is for himself. He has disappeared in the labyrinth of nerves and nerve-functions; or he has been caught in the machinery of habit, and in the whirl of the automatic wheel he has become invisible; or among the quicksands of the "states of mind" theory, and in the mud that gathers in the channel under the "stream of consciousness," he has sunk out of sight. The utterance of the Greek oracle assumed that the knower and his object were real, and that they were together. That oracle is dumb; its assumptions are no longer treated as divine; and to know himself it is to-day incumbent upon a man to find himself. The answer to this challenge is through the assertion of the soul in knowledge and in character, in truth and in love; and the study of man as the creator of his own world.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIAL ULTIMATE: HUMANITY

I

CARLYLE'S compassion for individual sufferers is well known. In concrete instances of distress no one could be more considerate. For the mass of mankind he had little but scorn. His feeling for the human race is expressed in his judgment upon the population of Great Britain: "Forty millions, mostly fools." He reminds one of the New England minister who said: "I detest humanity, but I love individual men." There is a class of thinkers to whom the race counts for little, to whom individual souls are the sole concern. On the other hand is Emerson who confessed: "I love man, but I hate men." The general idea of man was full of attraction and significance for Emerson, but the particular persons in whom the general idea was embodied did not at all interest him. They were inferior, and they did not appeal to imagination and sympathy. That Emerson yielded to this aristocratic revulsion from the multitude is not for one moment to be admitted. He simply confesses, in

absolute honesty, the strong current of desire. The ideal man engaged and inspired his spirit, the abstract man was to him immensely significant, the concept humanity was his native air. This is indeed the temptation of the idealist. I happened to meet Phillips Brooks fresh from the reading of Cabot's "Life of Emerson," and he quoted with much merriment Emerson's confession: "I love man, but I hate men" as an expression of his own instincts. Never was there a more democratic soul than Phillips Brooks, never was there a man who served individual cases of need with more intense and rapt devotion; and yet this great spirit knew his own weakness. He saw at once the profound criticism which Emerson made upon himself, and which held good for the idealistic tendency in all men. The realist cries that the individual is everything; the idealist contends that the race is the great object of interest.

There is a mood in which both individualism and racialism are reconciled. One can think of a man like Livingstone traversing the Dark Continent, everywhere meeting the saddest sights. Men and women appear before him apparently but little above the brutes. The sight of the eye affects the heart; and yet this great missionary of civilization is somehow able to discern in every degraded human being the image

of God, the possible disciple of Jesus Christ. That is no doubt the mood into which Emerson fought his way; it is the mood in which Phillips Brooks lived his beautiful life; it is the mood in which every genuine believer in man must finally rest. The concrete and the abstract, the particular and the universal, the real and the ideal must somehow be seen together, and as together making up the whole truth of life.

Here one discovers how close to feeling and practical interest are some of the strangest philosophical formulas. At first sight nothing could be more unpractical than the endless debate between the mediæval realist and nominalist. But when one carries the debate out of the heathen hands of the schoolmen back to its origin in Greek philosophy, one begins to see how profoundly vital it is. The old Protagorean nominalism, is simply the theoretic account of Carlyle's compassion for the particular person, and his contempt for the mass of mankind. Individuals are all that we have, says the Greek sophist; general views are fictions and the proper objects of philosophic scorn. Emerson's love of the universal and his disregard for the individual man is nothing but Platonism in feeling. The idea, the general view, the notion is not simply real, it is the only reality. The world of reality is extra-mental, extra-human;

it is a world where general ideas exist in a sublime harmony; and the vision of this supersensible realm and not the fields of time and space is the reward of wisdom. What is this but the philosophic consecration of our love of man, and the philosophic justification of our aversion to men. Livingstone's vision of God in the poorest soul, his detection of the possible disciple of Christ in the most degraded human being, is but the great insight of Aristotle applied to life. The individual and the universal, the particular thing and the general truth, the real and the ideal belong together, and together make up the one world. Here is a witness in an unexpected quarter to the fact that all genuine thinking concerns human feeling and conduct, and that the grand philosophical debates of the world need only to be translated into their original interests in order to disclose their high and enduring vitality.

The most august instance of the mood in which the individual and the universal are reconciled has yet to be named. It is the Judgment Parable of Jesus found in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. Nowhere is ethical nominalism so impressively condemned as here. Nowhere does mere idealism meet with such consuming scorn as in these sublime utterances of Jesus. The men who see nothing in human

suffering but animal suffering, and the men who worship an ideal out of all relation to the suffering world pass under a terrible sentence. The surprise of the ethical nominalist and abstract idealist is in these words: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" The answer is in these words: "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me." The surprise of the Christian is in his unconscious Christianity: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" The answer explains the mystery: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."[1] They looked upon men as men; they ministered to human suffering as human suffering; and they found that their service to individuals involved humanity, that their humanity involved Christian humanity. Thus does Jesus bind person to person; thus does he lift the commonwealth of persons in their ordinary animal needs into a life identified with his own.

[1] Matthew xxv. 37–45.

What is humanity? Is it possible to give a definite answer to this question? Humanity in this discussion means several things. It means that human beings constitute a kind, as birds or quadrupeds constitute a kind. It is true that no kind stands wholly by itself; in every kind differentiation rises, in some instances, to great heights, while in others it sinks almost out of sight. There are difficulties of classification on the boundaries of all forms of life. Is the bat a bird or a mammal? Is the flying fish to be classified upward or downward? On the boundaries of the human race similar difficulties occur. These difficulties are illustrated by the famous colloquy between the child and its attendant at the menagerie: "Where is the bear? There, standing by the Irishman. Which is the Irishman? The animal with the umbrella." On the evolutionary hypothesis these difficulties, at an earlier date, must have been overwhelming. At the present time, however, the general distinction of the human race is obvious. The distinguishing traits of man are shared in a perceptible degree by nearly all human beings, so that they may be said to form a class by themselves.

Humanity means, in the second place, that the significant mark of man is the capacity for a life ordered in moral reason. Man is capable

of gaining a moral view of the world, and of proposing for himself an end in accordance with this view. Righteousness is the supreme interest of human society, and the perception of this fact and a life ordered in homage to it is a possibility for all men. In the carrying out of this moral programme in a moral world, the need of God and his reality are first discovered. And that man has the capacity to enter into covenant with the Supreme moral reason is but another way of stating his essential characteristic. He is made in the image of God; that is, he lives in a moral world, and his vocation is to live for ends in keeping with that world. He is a son of God; that is, there is an essential kinship between God and man, and man's highest distinction is his capacity for moral response to God's moral appeal. It is believed that this note is universally distinctive of mankind. There is in all men the capacity for a life ordered in moral reason; there is between all men and the Infinite an indestructible affinity, an essential answerableness as of the image to the original; there is in all men the filial possibility which when spoken to with prevailing power becomes filial fact, filial experience, and distinct sonhood to God.

Humanity means, in the third place, that God's fatherly purpose in Christ covers all men.

What God intends for one or some he intends for all. This is one great meaning of the Incarnation. God's intention for Jesus Christ is significant of his intention for mankind. He wills holiness for the whole race, for each and for all; and in pursuance of this goal which he has set up for every human being, he sends forth his Spirit to strive with men. God is on the side of every soul that he has made; he is for it, and not against it, forever and ever. Whatever the issues of time and eternity may be, this truth is clear to every believer in Jesus Christ, that the will of God proposes for every man an infinite good, and that the discipline of existence and the entire mechanism of retribution are but God's ways of seeking to hold or to recover the soul to the divine purpose of its being. Without the shelter of God's loving intention over every human life there is no gospel, there is no humanity. We bind mankind into one by the one purpose of infinite and everlasting love that covers the race. The secret place of the Most High, the shadow of the Almighty is his purpose of good and only good in creating men; and it is nothing but the witness to the sincerity of this purpose that he sends forth in its behalf the Holy Spirit of realization.

Humanity means, finally, the universal answerableness to moral standards, the universal

amenableness to the moral God. Here is the universal distinction: man is subject to moral judgment; he is under the government of the Supreme conscience. This does not mean that class-interests are necessarily illegitimate. Privileges and immunities are often essential to the public service, as when the general commands his army from a position miles away from the zone of fire. The family is a private institution, and yet it is essential to social good. The service of the world is impossible otherwise than in and through particular affections and special interests. The rivers feed the sea; but they have their own distinct life as an essential antecedent to this work. There is room for the specialization of mankind; there is indeed a demand for it. Under the life of the family, the vocation, the clan, the brotherhoods of science and trade, and the fellowship of the nation, there is eternal fitness. But these interests are subject to a reference beyond themselves. They are brought to the judgment seat of the brotherhood of man. Whatever in trade, in society, in education, in government, and in religion, sets itself against man as man, is base, and has no business to be. The supreme characteristic of man does not lie in those things which distinguish him from other men, but in those things which he possesses in common with all men.

Not in birth, endowment, position, wealth, power, and fame does the great distinction lie, but in the universal reason and conscience, in the moral equality of mankind in the presence of the moral God. In the Parable of the talents we find unequal ability expressed in equal fidelity equally rewarded. To the man whose five talents became ten, and to him whose two talents became four, the same commendation is given: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."[1] In the Parable of the pounds we see equal ability expressed in unequal fidelity, unequally rewarded. In the case where the pound became ten pounds, the servant is distinctly commended and set over ten cities; in the case where the pound became five pounds, the servant is without special commendation set over five cities.[2] In the Parable of the laborers we are shown the value of motive in work. Those who had labored the whole day, and those who had labored only a part of the day, or even for one hour, received the same wages. The three parables belong together. One emphasizes unequal ability and equal fidelity; another throws into relief equal ability and unequal fidelity; while still another considers not the product, but the

[1] Matthew xxv. 14–24. [2] Luke xix. 11–19.

motive of labor.[1] These parables are the political economy of the kingdom of God; and they show human life in a grand equalization in the presence of God. One kind, one kind whose distinguishing mark is kinship to God, whose career is covered with the purpose of Infinite love, whose standing is upon the ground of conscience in the presence of the Eternal conscience; that is humanity.

II

In another volume I have treated of some of the grand historic perils of humanity.[2] The human interpretation of existence has had to fight its way from the beginning. Never at any time has it been a secure possession of mankind. It has been a militant interpretation; it has survived and conquered because those who were for it have been stronger than those who were against it. The historic campaign between the man and the brute is far from an end. On the various levels of the flesh, the intellect, and the spirit, the conflict still goes on. Over the whole field of time there is indeed an undeniable and an immeasurably important victory of the man over the brute. Upon the whole, history is the record of the defeat of inhumanity. Still

[1] A. B. Bruce, *The Parabolic Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 178–225.
[2] *The New Epoch for Faith*, chap. ii.

this defeat has never been decisive. Human interests and values have never been free from the menace of the unsubdued brutality in the world. An invasion from beneath, an incursion of inhumanity, is still among the things to be dreaded. The historic root of bitterness still lives, and apples of Sodom continue to compete with the fruits of the tree of life.

There are, however, special perils peculiar to our time, surrounding the human interpretation of existence. The grand historic danger is seen by every serious person; but the new forms of menace are not universally discerned. The deepest, as well as the most general, of these forms of menace is what may be called the naturalistic view of life. According to this view, human life is but the extension of the lower life of the world. All life is essentially one in kind. Continuity is the great note in the vital concert. The essential problems of all life are two, — the food problem and the race problem. Self-preservation and self-reproduction are the heart of all existence. All industry and all society, all thinking and all behavior, have their meaning with reference to these two problems. Life, with its double task, is wholly of this world; it is concerned with no other; it knows of no other. Natural history covers the movement and behavior of life alike in the human and the sub-

human spheres. The main business of man and beast is the same; it is to maintain life and to repeat it in descendants. Political economy, ethics, social science, government, and art are as truly, although not so fully, predicable of the bee as of the human being. The intellectual and moral life of man is sound only as it relates to self-continuance and self-reproduction; it is genuine only so far as it is an amplification of the intellectual and moral life of the animal. Heaven and hell, other than happy or unhappy terrestial moods and conditions, are unknown to this view; the eternal consequence of human behavior is a poetic exaggeration; right and wrong have an essentially biological meaning, and transcendental significance they have none; the thirst of the human soul for the living God is a fanaticism, a form of disease; the question of life after death is one that must be settled in the negative. The whole supersensuous and divine meaning of existence becomes mythological; the unique dignity and career of man is lost in his complete identification with the life below him.

This is the profoundest and the most serious menace to the human interpretation of man's existence. It must be met with the whole power of an inspired humanity. It is a caricature, and as such excites indignation; but it is not a con-

scious caricature. It is the mood into which men drop when the vigorous application of conscience to life has ceased. The interpretation of human existence downward is inevitable when its upward affinities cease to be urgent, when they become altogether passive and dim. The natural man always looks for his kindred below him, and where the spiritual man is as good as non-existent, life sinks almost without protest. This permanent tendency, in the absence of the counter-pull of vigorous conscience, to construe the man into the animal, has been immensely strengthened by the scientific attitude of the last fifty years. Natural inclination has been fixed by culture; and the mood that meets the preacher of the Gospel of the divine humanity is that of spiritual incapacity and incredulity. How can these things be? is the strange question that comes up from multitudes.

Much has been done to overcome this habit; but much remains to be done. The emphasis must be laid upon the uniqueness of man. Continuity is an overworked truth; it must be relieved by the truth of human distinction. The transformation of animal instincts in man by moral reason must be exhibited as the normal human life. The presence of love must be shown to give a new character to the animal endowment of mankind. The human home is

founded in instinct as transfigured by moral reason. Business with all its outrages is still a moral fellowship. This is attested by the legal system of the land, which is an imperfect expression, but still an expression, of the sense of social justice. That business is essentially a moral fellowship is further attested by the fact that it is the subject of unsparing moral judgment. That ethics deals not only with results but also with motives is evident. Behavior must date itself from within, the pure act from the pure spirit. Government is the highest expression of the social conscience, and as such is a uniquely human institution. Obligation covers mankind, and again the human race lives in a moral order. The cry for the fellowship of the Infinite is the superlative distinction of man. He was made for God, and he cannot rest until he rests in God. In him we live and move and have our being; and in consequence, human life in its animal endowment and functions, in its natural instincts and order is wholly transcendent in its ultimate significance. It is a value to which there is, on the earth, no parallel. Human beings are a kind by themselves; and the human interpretation of existence is but holding the race to its own uniqueness. The normal being of man is in love, and love is of concern to the Infinite; it is part of the highest meaning

of the world. The failure in love is man's supreme failure; it is his sin. It is despite done to the Highest, and again concerns all worlds. Thus with the moral organization of human life, with the power of its moral victory and the shame of its moral defeat, and above all, with the consciousness of the moral Deity whose inspiration is its understanding, the preacher is to meet and defy this peril of humanity.

The scientific conception of the survival of the fittest is begging hard to be adopted by theology. The supply of food upon the animal level is limited, and nature produces organisms in bewildering profusion. These enter into the sternest struggle with one another for a share in the restricted food supply. Since there is not food enough for all the forms of life, the stronger crowd the weaker to the wall, obtain possession of the treasure, and so survive. This may be an admirable method for bringing up to a high standard the physical excellence of any race. There may be, upon the whole, little objection to it upon the purely animal level. It is obviously applicable to man upon the animal plane. Population is still kept down in human society by the same fatal pressure that rests upon the lower races. More human beings are brought into existence than can be adequately supported. This insufficient support is extended

by the strong through their own better endowment; but the weak have no resource but death. The appalling death-rate among the world's children is an attestation of the fact that when men live on the animal level the universe deals with them on the animal method.

On the animal level death has been called the servant of life. This is an ambiguous statement. If a lion's family of male and female and four cubs are in excess of the available supply of food, the two weaker cubs die, and two results follow. The reduced family are now in far less straightened circumstances; the father and the mother and the two surviving cubs become fat and flourishing. Their life has been improved by the death of their weaker relatives. And since the continuance of lion-life has been committed to the stronger surviving cubs, death again becomes the servant of life. But there is another side to the family history. How would this improvement appear to the two cubs that were killed because nature had not given them sufficient strength to live? Of whose life is death the servant? Not surely of the dead cubs. There is, therefore, a vast region of existence where death is not the servant, but the extinguisher of life. And this is not the whole story. Death may indirectly improve the life that it spares by sweeping out of

existence competing forms of life, and by forbidding them to express themselves in descendants. But on the animal level, death and individualism are in absolute enmity. Death is never the servant of the individual organism, it is always and only its absolute destroyer. In so far as man is a physical organism and nothing more, death improves him by extinction.

Now the adoption by theology of the idea of the survival of the fittest simply brings man back to the animal level. Multitudes are produced in order that nature may make a selection of the strongest for the purpose of becoming parents of the next generation. In each generation the waste of life is enormous. Election to life covers but the few finest specimens; reprobation to death is the fate of the overwhelming majority among the lower races. This is the new Calvinism that is tempting thinkers. It is the Calvinism of nature; it is a theology elaborated from the method of the universe with animal life. When applied to man it is the translation of the method of the brute world into the human world. It means that more souls come into existence than can be educated into permanent power. It signifies that the enormous multitudes of human beings that are born are expressly produced in order that a better selection for life may be made, and that the finer election involves the

wider reprobation. On this ground one has one's humanity to win, and one can never be sure that one has been made strong enough to win it. Humanity is thus an ideal which a few are born to compass, but which for men in general is a hopeless impossibility. The race of man thus becomes a race in an animal world. As a whole its affinities are with the beasts that perish; as a kind it has no original and everlasting relation to the Infinite conscience and pity. It is impossible to stop here. The method of the animal world must be imported as a whole. Natural selection is in order to improve the breed; the individual is of account only as the progenitor of the better race. Nature puts an end to him when he can no longer serve her. If this is the way in which the universe treats man, let us face the consequences. The many are called, but only the few are chosen as distinct citizens in the commonwealth of moral worth. But these are chosen only as the parents of a race of increasing moral dignity; when they can no longer promote the end for which they were elected, death comes and puts into execution the decree of final reprobation. Thus the mood that cannot accept humanity as made in the image of God, that seeks by scientific methods to discover a divine humanity within the compass of an animal race, ends with the loss even of its elect, the loss

too of the God whose determinations are wholly without moral character. The method of nature with the animal transferred to the human sphere, and converted into the method of the universe with man, fails to elevate the animal, but it succeeds in deposing and degrading man. The conclusion is that the law of humanity is found nowhere but in humanity.

A few words will suffice for the peril to humanity from the idea of conditional immortality.[1] It is a compromise with difficulty and a compromise at a fearful expense. It seeks to get rid of endless punishment, and at the same time to avoid the affirmation or implication of universal salvation. It is an endeavor to escape from the necessity of making brutal man immortal. It tries to create a new motive for righteousness: "Be good and you will live forever." On all grounds it seems to me one of the least reasonable of human opinions. It recognizes no world-plan under man's historic struggle. The universe is neutral toward man's conflict with the brutality that means extinction. It has an exaggerated notion of freedom. God creates men free; he provides the field of battle; men by their use or abuse of freedom fix either their immortality or their mortality. Everything de-

[1] For fuller discussion, see *The Witness to Immortality*, pp. 300–310.

pends upon the individual freeman; and God might as well not be. But environments differ, and endowments differ, and the question comes, Who made these things to differ? The neutral God becomes the old Calvinistic God of election and reprobation. David did not kill Uriah; he only put him in the line of battle where he knew that he could not live. God leaves it open to all men to become immortal; but some men he brings into the world from an ancestry so high and puts them into an environment so pure and inspiring that their immortality is secure from the moment of their arrival; while other men he sends into life loaded with an evil inheritance and overwhelmed with a hostile environment, and thus from the beginning decrees their extinction. Freedom without a world-plan is a poor philosophy of human life, especially since the world-plan cannot be suppressed, but emerges in the immense moral inequalities of inheritance and environment as an unconditional decree of some to endless existence, and of others to final extinction.

But the criticism that concerns us here is that the idea of conditional immortality breaks up the sense of the uniqueness of mankind. We must fight it in the name of the Fatherhood of God from whom we date the human race. The link between the saint and God is part of the chain that binds the race to God. Men begin, con-

tinue, and end in the moral will of God; they are covered by his Fatherly purpose. Their sin is the sin of children against the Infinite Father; their life both in its goodness and baseness is in everlasting relation to his. If the preacher is to look upon every man as a child of God, if he is to consider every human being as made expressly to repeat in himself the image of Christ, he must disown conditional immortality, and expose the compromise in which it originates and the compound which it is of superficialities and contradictions. It wholly ignores the supreme difficulty that besets belief in immortality, the dependence of the mind upon the brain; it disregards the enormous inequalities of inheritance and environment which make the question of fitness to survive death unanswerable by man, and which may show to the most worthy judge Eternal that the criminal is, all things considered, a higher moral value than the saint; it introduces Pharisaism and old-world notions of aristocracy which have no place in an ethical view of the universe; it begins with an impossible conception of freedom, and ends with an implicit world-plan that operates with absolute immunity from justice; and it breaks down the racial consciousness into which Christianity has been bringing the nations, reduces sonhood to God from a fact to a bare possibility, and transforms humanity

from a reality into a bloodless and incompetent ideal.

The media through which all the enemies of the unique distinction of man work, past and present, are an inhuman view of the universe and man's inhumanity to man. Atheism and a full humanity are mutually destructive. The extra-physical life of the race, its higher wisdom, nobler morality, loftier love and spirit, must come to appear as useless and vain under the fixed indifference of a godless universe. Inside the infinite domain of a brutal universe, men must fall from their properly human ideals. The kingdom of love in the heart of an atheistic world is an impossible enterprise. The strain is too much for mankind. The Christian conception of human society would seem to be the vainest dream, if all things other than human are against it. Man is no match for a wholly inhuman universe. Sooner or later the most heroic must see that it is but vaulting ambition for man to seek a kingdom of love in the face of infinite brutality. Fix in the human mind the idea that the character of the Infinite is inhuman, and the ethical idealism into which the successive generations of youth inevitably flower becomes merely subjective, the play of imagination upon physical interests the aurora borealis of a polar humanity. Stoicism lived because it was able to put itself in league

with the universe. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius ground their ideals upon the character of the Infinite. Make the sum of things indifferent to man, and Epicureanism becomes the creed of the race.

The preacher must guard the character of the Infinite as the highest human interest. All theories that limit the Divine regard for mankind are indictments framed against the character of God. The idea of the survival of the fittest, the conception of conditional immortality, and the progenitor of both in our time, the naturalistic view of human existence, are finally an attack upon the love of God. As they thrive, faith in the absoluteness of God fades away. They are steps toward the last and deadliest peril of mankind, the enthronement of an inhuman interpretation of the universe. Under the heavens that have become brass lies the earth that has become iron; under the universe that has become inhuman is a humanity in reversion toward brutehood.

Man's inhumanity to man is the other medium through which all dangers to society, ancient and recent, show their power. Lust and lies and the unspeakable custom of the world's shame, the dishonor of home, the injustice and cruelty that live in the industrial order, the snobbery and foppery of social life, the ghastly smile that cov-

ers the loveless heart, and the venomous tongue that delights to destroy good repute and peace, the commercialism that would convert the nation into an advertising agent of its wares, the provincialism that cares nothing for man as man, the poverty that is unrelieved, the suffering that is unmitigated, and the brutal strength that is indifferent to the cry of weakness, — all are momentous and awful because they sum up, set forth, and put into action man's inhumanity to man. The entire inhuman custom of life is to be defied in the name of the integrity and hope of mankind.

III

Among the permanent guardians of humanity there stands first man's own nature, his personality. The admission of human personality is eventually the trumpet of doom to slavery, serfdom, and caste. Kant's famous dictum that personality implies that man is an end to himself, and that he should never become means either to another's purposes or to his own inclinations, is an availing protest. Use things, but use them wisely; use animals, but use them kindly; use men never; that is the edict from the throne of moral personality. Under the historic expression of moral personality, family exclusiveness, social snobbery, governmental injustice, and

religious narrowness have slowly yielded. The increasing pressure of manhood has been availing. The wider realization of personality among the masses of men through education of the intellect and the will is already effecting enormous changes in the social order. As he rises in intelligence and character man must continue to count for more; and as society is affected with the sense of human personality its consideration for the unfortunate must become deeper and more practical. Social groups have been formed upon social distinctions; and so long as these are not exclusive they are legitimate enough. But the admission that man is man, the increasing consciousness of personality that has forced this admission calls for the wider recognition of what is common in the race. When moral worth is the great title to consideration, and the capacity for it the distinctive mark of man, a force is liberated that will finally inaugurate the reign of human brotherhood. Meanwhile practical Christianity goes about building up moral personality. Ancient tyrannies would have been impossible but for the absence of manhood among the people. When Diogenes said that he had never seen a man he uncovered the whole opportunity of secular barbarity, social exclusiveness, political injustice, and religious quackery. Men's ideas of the race will be very

different when over great circles of population they compel respect from one another. A whole world of bad social ethics, and worse social practice, and equally reprehensible theology, would utterly vanish, if suddenly men were to face one another in the fullness and strength of a great moral experience. The first witness that the true social ultimate is mankind is the worth and inviolableness of human personality.

The second is in the Christian idea of stewardship. The legal title to property does not end the discussion. The legal right must rise into a moral right; otherwise it would seem to be increasingly insecure. It is not difficult to forecast the time when the control of wealth will be conditioned upon the beneficent use of it. Society will not always grant privileges to idlers and rascals. The day is not far distant when a man shall be compelled to justify the continuance of his privileges by reference to the eminent public service which they enable him to perform. Wanton wealthy individualism is drawing toward its end. No reasonable person will grudge a Washington or a Lincoln, a Gladstone or a Bismarck, his privileges. The great servant of the public must have high qualifications; and certain privileges are essential to the development and maintenance of these qualifications. The scholar must have opportunity and

leisure. The higher the endowment and the more eminent the service to be rendered, the larger must be the privilege. The distinction of Christ is an example. His privilege in intellect, in feeling, and in character, in what the universe meant to him, in what he got out of existence, and in the power to which he attained, was just, because the whole distinction of his being was held for mankind. The social problem seems to me to be less over the possession by the few of large fortunes, and much more over the use made of these fortunes. The fundamental contention is that one has a moral right, a human right to wealth only in so far as he holds it for the public good. That contention seems to me to be ethically undeniable. There is no other basis in Christian morals for the inequalities of human existence. The whole subject comes under the precept of the apostle: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Strength is wholly inhuman unless it is under the moral obligation of strength.

A true theory of expansion seems to be needed. Expansion itself is a fact. In a comfortable home the ministry of the race is represented. More and more business tends toward cosmopolitanism; and through their representation at foreign courts or governments the civ-

ilized nations of the earth are in fellowship. Armies and navies are simply the national and international police, a good thing in time of peace, indeed a pledge of its continuance. Education has no bounds short of the ends of the earth; religious enterprise undertakes to bring the world to the sense of God. The conception of society in which these tendencies are at work must be an inclusive one. Ideally at least anything less than universal brotherhood will not do. Private interests are admitted as legitimate, but they must be adjusted to social good. In theory and in practice one must follow the sun. The sun is at the centre of the system and round it in the narrowest circle and the most intimate communion is Mercury. Then follow in ever widening circles Venus, the Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and on the far boundary, a veritable solar outcast and savage, is Neptune. The duty of the central luminary is plain. It is to shine first upon those that are nearest to it, but not upon them alone. The solar volume spreads over all, and fills the outermost circle with the same tide of light and heat with which it kindles and glorifies the innermost. There is no other social ultimate for man. Love knows no bounds short of the whole. It follows first upon families, but it does not stop there. It rolls through all the circles of human affiliation; and the

force that rocks the cradle in which the mother has laid her firstborn is the power that carries the infant races into civilized manhood. The issue of science in her nineteenth century freedom has been the discrimination of the human races from all other forms of life upon this planet. Evolution is but the imperfect record of the amazing self-differentiation of man from the lower orders of existence. Christian theology comes in to hold the achievements of science. The one distinct race has with it as a whole and forever the one true and living God. And the social ideal is bound to equal the scientific and the theological. Man must side with man here and everywhere, now and forever.

Exclusive moods are inevitable, and they are justifiable in their use. There are times when the best man will wish to be alone, when the thought of the endless multitudes of human beings who have lived upon the earth or who today live upon it, or who will inhabit it, is positively oppressive. The solitary mood has many noble uses, no one of which, however, is now to be mentioned. The mood goes too far when it longs for a sparsely populated kingdom of God either in this world or the next. And it may serve to rid one of this exclusive mood to recall the fact that the greatest debt of the individual man is to his race. The science, the art, the

philosophy, the faith, the whole higher civilization of the world, is an achievement of the human race. It represents what man has done for men. Genius is the highest expression of the forces that vitalize it, that supply it with its whole content, and that have their home in the heart of mankind. And as it was not matter of regret but of gladness to Wellington and his hard-pressed soldiers at Waterloo when the sixty thousand Prussians under Blücher were seen in the distance; as it was not an occasion of grief but of congratulation to the loyal American in the civil war when the response rang out to the call of the President, "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong;" so when it is seen that the normal man owes the fullness and security of his spiritual possessions to the race, numbers will then mean, not sources of oppression, but of freedom and power.

Human personality, the obligation of the strong to the weak, and the universal reference and logic of every truly Christian life are the great forces that have broken down the social exclusiveness of Christendom. The religion of Christ is an ethical religion; and its central word is reconciliation. It shows the world the sublime moral personality of Jesus operating upon the moral personality of men, bringing them into a new and inclusive social whole, and

putting that social whole into the deepest communion with God. And it is the influence of Christ that has brought the world to the position where every true man must be cosmopolitan. The ultimate conception for the individual life — moral personality — under Christianity has completed itself in mankind as the social ultimate. The terms that admit one admit all. The recognition of the human element in any man means the final recognition of it in the entire race. Social order is slowly leaving feudalism behind it. The time is coming when the badges of social exclusiveness will undergo the change that long ago overtook the signs of the Scottish clans. Like the tartans they will remain interesting emblems of a social condition that has gone, picturesque memorials of division cherished by the generous soul of human brotherhood.

The supreme guardian of the humanity of the race is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It pushes into prominence the personal soul of the individual man, it accentuates the worth and the possibility of worth that is present in every human being. The single parable of Dives and Lazarus has in it elemental force as a witness to human personality. The beggar who is yet a moral value for the unseen world, and the rich man who is a moral offense for that same world,

show the supreme emphasis that Christ put upon the soul. His teaching renders legible the constitution written by the finger of God upon the heart. The invisible characters leap into light under his speech, and man is able to read his own name. And in and through the teaching, there is in the Gospel a spirit that leads men into a new world of moral experience. Conscience counts for more and more until it counts for everything. The struggle under the ideal, and in its behalf, becomes the normal human life; temptation is the constant element of existence, and temptation overcome is life's increasing achievement. Moral achievement in the heart of grave difficulty is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Thus the human personality that is brought to light through the teaching of Jesus is attested through the world of moral struggle and victory into which he leads men.

That the strong should help the weak is the obligation of the human conscience. That obligation is developed under Christianity with peculiar power. The struggle for life that one finds in the cosmos is apt to be reproduced in society as a natural law, and man is thus degraded to the level of nature. The supreme protest against the doctrine of the survival of the fittest comes from the Gospel. When self-

seeking looks downward for the justification of its hardness of heart, conscience looks toward the cross of Christ for the more excellent way. The struggle for the life of others, which Professor Drummond was among the first to emphasize as a fact in cosmic existence, receives its highest expression in the death of Jesus. He died because it was his duty to die. He was set for the defense of the weak, and to make that defense availing he must himself lay down his life. He was the divine struggler for the life of others, and to carry that struggle into an assurance of victory, he must pass through death. The cross of Christ is the symbol of love as the final law of life. It is the great antagonist of the rule of conduct borrowed from the animal world. Against the ethics deduced from the survival of the fittest there stands the ethics of the cross.

Time and space count for all that they are worth in the teaching of Jesus; neighborhood is never emptied of its meaning by him. Still there are no boundaries for him that do not encompass all human beings. Foreign missions are still in their crude state; yet are they an essential expression of Christianity. The unity of love in the Godhead is to be reproduced in human society. Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it; except

the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh in vain. In establishing the race in the consciousness of its own unity and in conforming behavior to this consciousness we look to the Master. He has seen the divine meaning of life; his spirit is the spirit of revelation and realization. The highest human interests are under his protection; and when one thinks of the forces that threaten the humanity of man, one must make a new application of the Hebrew song: —

> "The Lord is thy keeper:
> The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
> The sun shall not smite thee by day,
> Nor the moon by night.
> The Lord shall keep thee from all evil;
> He shall keep thy soul.
> The Lord shall keep thy going out and thy coming in,
> From this time forth and for evermore." [1]

Two fundamental articles of faith for the modern believer have now been won. He cannot consider himself poor who is able to make this beginning. To be sure of man as a citizen of a moral commonwealth, and to include in that commonwealth all the races that go to make up mankind is a good foundation. The possibilities of a great message and a joyful service begin to dawn upon the believer. He has not yet found all that he needs; he may never be able to do

[1] Psalm cxxi. 5–8.

that. But in finding himself and his brother he has started upon discoveries which will put him in the best kind of apostolical succession. He has had his first bout in his great fight for faith; he has struck for simple human things and he has won. And as the social ultimate was given in the individual ultimate, as the possible worth for righteousness of all men was involved in the possible worth of one man, as the second was drawn out of the first like one section of a telescope out of another, there is hope that the logical evolution may go on.

CHAPTER VI

THE HISTORICAL ULTIMATE: OPTIMISM

I

VARIOUS opinions are possible concerning the character and drift of human history. Pessimism may be the final word for it. It may be held that human affairs began in a bad way, that they have been steadily going from bad to worse, and that the goal can be nothing but universal and absolute disaster. It has, in fact, been preached with unquestionable sincerity and power that existence is a disease, that conscious being is inevitable misery, that the denial of the will to live is the only salvation, and that the last and supreme consolation lies in the assurance, —

> "This little life is all thou must endure,
> The grave's most holy peace is ever sure."

On this view, history is a colossal Sodom and Gomorrah; the foul egoism breeds ever vaster woe and despair; and the fire and brimstone that wiped out the cities of the plain are to be regarded as angels of mercy and types of the final whirlwinds that shall roll all human wretch-

edness into the peace of extinction. According to this view, death is the redeemer of mankind.

The opposite of this opinion may be entertained. It may be held that human beings are slowly moving from bad conditions into better, and that an irresistible impulse is pushing the race onward from one improvement to another and a higher, and that it is not difficult to forecast the time when man shall attain a new character in the heart of a nobler social environment. History, according to this view, is a drama that is to be judged by its issues; it is a picture upon which the supreme artist is working, whose merits must not be inferred from the first sketch, or from its appearance at any given stage of advance, but from the ideal whose light increasingly shines in it, and which shall yet conform the great canvas to its own divine character. According to this view, life conquers all sorrow; the law of improvement and increase is written on its heart; no weapon formed against it can prosper; and human history is moving toward final triumph. Because of the end upon which the race is moving, optimism is applied to history; because of the contribution which all worthy persons make toward the last great conquest, it is held that life, even under conditions of hardship and suffering, is an unexpressible boon.

Hypothetical optimism may be the view taken of the historical situation. The human world seems to certain thinkers to be originally indeterminate, but convertible by human choice and endeavor into either best or worst. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse."[1] The human being is born equidistant from optimism and pessimism. God has made the dual possibilities of existence; to man he has left it to unify this dualism in either an earthly inferno or paradise. This appears to be the view taken by Professor William James in his impressive book, "The Will to Believe." The actual course of our human world is unpredictable; all that can be said of it is that the indeterminate may be wrought over into worst or best. Possible optimism is the phrase that covers the case, — an optimism which must be taken out of the clouds of a hostile cosmos and a brutal society by the high choice and the heroic endeavor of man. According to this view, man is his own saviour.

To many persons the question of optimism concerns only the inward life. It is only incidentally related to environment, cosmic or social. The life of Dives is a pessimism in spite of a royal environment; the life of Lazarus is an optimism, notwithstanding want and suffering.

[1] Deuteronomy xi. 26.

In this view there can be no generalization touching the historical career of man. Condition counts for nothing; character counts for everything; and character is wholly an individual achievement. The dying Christ prays: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and his first great witness speaks for the entire community of the brave and wise when he cries in behalf of those who are stoning him to death: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." The question of the success or defeat of life belongs wholly in the sphere of the spirit; and its concern is entirely with the individual soul. This mood answers the question of historic optimism or pessimism with another question: Wilt thou be a Dives or a Lazarus, a Stephen or a shedder of innocent blood?

Such are some of the varieties of opinion possible upon this grave subject. Risk is plainly involved in making a selection. Like the Dutch humorist who chose the twelve apostles for his jury, and announced his willingness to wait for the adjudication of his case until they arrived, one must be prepared to admit that whichever selection one may make of opinions bearing upon the ultimate issues of history, there can be no demonstration of its truth this side of the day of judgment. Still opinions of one stamp or another are inevitable; and in regard to human

history, the field is logically divided between optimism and pessimism. Neither mood may be dogmatic; either may stand for an incompletely attested idea; each may signify simply an attitude of mind toward the career of man upon the earth, — an attitude of happy or of unhappy expectation. Optimism and pessimism are ultimately the result of contrasted judgments upon the historical situation. After the fall of Vicksburg and the battle of Gettysburg, General Grant said he was sure that the rebellion was doomed, that the United States was safe. Many agreed with the general in this judgment; more perhaps disagreed. After these victories of the Union armies, Grant was an optimist upon the national situation; looking upon the same situation, there were eminent men who had the gravest fears. Unquestionably the fact that Grant was a mighty fighter for union tended to inspire and sustain his optimism; while the pessimism of the mere military critic was doubtless increased by his inactivity. This example shows that there was a time when an intelligent judgment upon the issue of the conflict was impossible. That condition of suspense, however, could not last; things must move toward a crisis, and the movement must be an inspiration either to final hope or fear. The parallel to this national instance is

man in his historic situation. There may have been periods when no reasonable man could venture an opinion upon the ultimate tendencies and issues of history. Upon this subject there have been in all periods agnostics; and it would be rash to deny that upon the final issues of man's career on the earth, the agnostic has nothing to say for himself. Still suspense of judgment is, for any considerable time, and upon an intensely human question, a very painful and a nearly impossible condition. The agnostic is almost sure to eventuate in optimism or pessimism. According as history is believed to be making for human progress or against it will be the mood of hope or of horror. Thus optimism and pessimism are of the nature of prophecy. Over the birth of Jesus Christ Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Over the same event the wise men rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Each class had an ultimate characterization of the event incompletely attested; each did their utmost for their conception, and then awaited the confirmation or confutation of the future. Upon the whole, men must characterize history as working for good or evil; their ideas they must support with their strength; and for the supreme judgment upon their quarrel they must appeal to the end.

In claiming that optimism is the valid mood

in which to view the historic process, it must be clearly understood that the movement toward the best is ever in and through human choice and endeavor. The historic process may eventuate in ideal character and conditions and yet be in itself an agony and a bloody sweat. The career of Jesus ends in resurrection from the dead; but the path to that bright goal was dark enough surely. History may be held to be a process of moral illumination, and yet the passing away of ignorance may involve inexpressible human effort. History may mean the final conquest of unrighteousness, and still there may be room for the severest action of retributive law. There is no deliverance for man except with the consent and coöperation of man. The gifts of God are always, in the moral world, the achievements of man. Flowery beds of ease never have carried any one to the skies, and they never will. The judicial process is in the heart of human life. I am inclined to think that it is the deepest ground of hope for man. The fact that egoism is filled with the sense of its own horror and covered with the frown of the universe is the profoundest source of thanksgiving and high expectation. Here the judicial process is noted, not as inconsistent with, but as absolutely essential to optimism. The exaction of the utmost farthing is but the severe kindness,

the austere benignity, of the moral order. In upon light and love and the noble mastery of nature men are led and men are driven. This double inducement from high possession and from wretched privation is presented and wielded by honest and all-competent hands. In the doctrine of hope there is room for every aspect of the treatment which man in his ignorance and egoism, in his savage disregard of duty, and in his cultivated evasion of moral obligation, receives at the hand of his world environment.

II

Optimism and pessimism are of supreme moment to the preacher of righteousness. So far as these ideas are serious they are in life, and the preacher confesses at once the great primacy of life. Opinions that concern the happiness or the misery of mankind may be mere philosophies, idle theories to others, but for him they are of vital interest. For the preacher, optimism is the sunshine in which lie all the cheerful ways of men, the light in which his own work goes bravely forward. For him pessimism is the great negation of his message, the black contradiction in the face of which he sadly tries to rescue the perishing. Confidence in his message must turn the preacher into an optimist of one degree or another; while the settled sense

of final failure must end in breaking down his confidence altogether.

The world is a scene of moral conflict. Right and wrong, truth and falsehood meet in a life and death struggle. The use and the abuse of existence is the vast and mixed phenomenon. Confronting the lover and his sovereign reverence is the brutal man whose existence is "an expense of being in a waste of shame." Over against each other in battle array stand light and darkness, the world as a secular organization and the same world as a divine institute, Christ and Belial, the brute in man and the man in association with the brute. The war is on; it is as if one were to ask, Is it Sparta or Athens that is to gain, Carthage or Rome, the old empire or the new prophetic nations that swarm in upon it, French or British in America and in Europe, Dutch or British in the control of seas and continents, the United States as slaveholder or as the greatest witness in history for freedom? What is the relation of power to misery in this world? Is it that of Dives to Lazarus, simple and brutal indifference? And are we to look for anarchy and revolution, strife and bloodshed, crisis and calamity as the issue of this attitude of power to suffering? Or must we seek the parallel in Christ and his compassionate response to blind Bartimeus? The tu-

mult is there. The voices are there that would silence the appeal of distress. Those voices remind one of the world. But the Master is there, the appeal finds its way through all the tumult to his soul, and the supreme man becomes the deliverer of his brother. Is there a Christ in history, a Christ in humanity? Do the appeal of the weak and the response of the strong meet in the soul of man, and with high and serious hope?

Individual men must always be one great aim of the preacher. The question rises, however, is it possible to save a soul without thereby doing much toward saving a family, a business community, a social fellowship, a nation, a race? Is not the individual set into the social organism as the single tooth is into the head? Is it possible to extract the individual from society and yet retain his worth? Social hope is always the best sign of individual renewal. Bunyan's Pilgrim is true to Puritanism; but Puritanism, under one aspect, is an overdone individualism. Christiana is truer far to the spiritual life than Christian because she takes her children with her. Here the maternal instinct controlled the great Puritan; and the maternal instinct is representative of the love that can accept nothing short of social regeneration. The Pharisee turned apostle cannot abandon his race. He bears toward them, in the face of persistent persecution, a great

zeal; for his brethren's sake he could even wish himself accursed. In the constitution of social man Rachel still weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted because they are not. The beautiful mother of Israel even in the realm of peace sits in eternal sorrow over this dispersion and dishonor of her far-off descendants. Thus does Jeremiah bind into a common destiny the individual and the race. "O Absalom, my son!" That is the language of human love in all ages. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" That exclamation is eternally valid as an expression of the grief of Christ over social disaster.

In order, therefore, to be able to save souls one must believe in the possibility of saving families, societies, nations, the human race. It is indeed impossible to define the individual otherwise than as implicated in the largest way with society. Some one has defined the United States as bounded on the north by the Aurora Borealis, on the south by the Southern Cross, on the east by the primeval chaos, and on the west by the day of judgment. And in the same way in defining the individual man the universe must be taken into account. Considerations of this nature make it plain that in the profoundest sense individual and social salvation are nearly identical. One of the first questions which the Japanese ask the missionary concerning the

world of moral beatitude beyond death, is whether it is open to their ancestors. The question is an overwhelming one to those who provide only for the appeal to the living individual, and who have no Gospel for mankind.

The preacher is thus turned back to Hebraism and its magnificent social faith. Isaiah, Jeremiah, the great prophet of the exile, and indeed in a way the entire prophetic chorus, preach national regeneration. It may be said of them all, including John the Baptist, that social regeneration was their message, and that racial redemption was their hope. In the writings of these illustrious men appears the first rude sketch of a moral philosophy of man's career on the earth. Back to this Hebrew message for the nation, and to this open fountain of social optimism the preacher must go. Here in the ancient Scriptures which he reveres is the first great corrective of an overdone individualism, the earliest light of historic hope.

The sane and sovereign strength of Christ nowhere appears more striking than at this point. His kingdom is a society of individuals, and of individuals in society. He works upon men as individuals; but that work is to call them out of evil social relations into a new fellowship with one another, and with himself and his Father. He has no hope for society except

through the leavening power of individual souls; and he has no hope for individual souls except as inspired and sustained by a new social order. And out of this interdependence of the individual and society comes his optimism. The new individual in the new society is matched against the old individual in the old society. Concerning this contest the familiar words take on the profoundest meaning: The meek shall inherit the earth. He shall not cry nor lift up his voice in the streets; the bruised reed shall he not break, the smoking flax shall he not quench till he send forth truth unto victory. Heaven and earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away. I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Regeneration of the individual was the supreme interest of the great preachers of the past. What did this interest mean? It meant the call to the individual man to live under the sovereignty of conscience, as conscience is transfigured and upheld in authority by the Spirit of God. Regeneration meant the victorious assertion in the name of Christ, and by the Holy Spirit, of manhood against brutehood. Regeneration is still the chief interest of the preacher; but its meaning must be extended. Nothing but

the vision of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness can satisfy the prophetic soul to-day. Every individual convert is another pledge of the coming conversion of society. The new society, whether it is called the church or the kingdom, must be of utmost concern to the preacher. By the social power of love he seeks to break down the social power of wickedness, by the fellowship of men in light he tries to overthrow the solidarity of men in darkness.

Without faith in the invincibility of social righteousness it is impossible to be a preacher. The preacher is born in moral tumult and victory. His education repeats in his heart the temptation and the triumph of Jesus. His experience has filled him with the assurance that human life is amenable to moral ideas, that as the tides go by the silent force of unseen worlds, so the deeps in man are ruled out of ideal heights. Moral discovery, moral achievement, and moral hope make the preacher; and out of this discovery, achievement, and hope come his idealism, his plan for the world, and his confidence in its power of self-realization. The Hebrew prophets and the Christian apostles found their message through their conscience. The moral view of life and the universe was supreme and absolute. That view had taken possession of them; it had rung out a jubilee from the con-

cert of powers which it had discovered within them, and it claimed through them the whole world as its own. Optimism is thus the product of the moralist; it is the discovery of the men who have gone deepest into the ethical order of the world. It began in the tremendous ethical passion of the Hebrew prophet; it owes its origin to the preacher who met iniquity not with compromise and fear, but with heroic and consuming hostility. And as thus it began only thus can it be maintained. The victorious fighter for ideal ends is ever the only genuine apostle of optimism. Other men may play with the vocabulary of hope; on his words alone who is pushing his personal life into moral triumph is the accent of the Holy Ghost. The man who is without reasonable hope for himself cannot hold a gospel of hope for his fellowmen; and he who is a sound moral optimist for himself, unless he is a Pharisee, cannot be other than an optimist with reference to mankind.

III

Some account must now be taken of the chief difficulties that beset an optimistic view of human history. The conception of a golden age to which the Jew and the Christian and the evolutionist look forward may be an illusion. In this case the sincerest optimist may now and then feel

"My dreams are but the shadows of my hopes."

And yet the persistence of these hopes is in their favor. A soap bubble may float about among solid substances, and in a miraculous way survive; and yet that survival cannot be long. Either from expansion or collision it must soon perish. The æonian survival of the hope of an immeasurably better future for mankind on the earth would seem to prove that the hope is not a mere dream, and that it is not wholly contradicted by the stern environment in which men live. Such a golden age as has fired the imagination of Hebrew seer, Christian apostle, French encyclopædist, and revolutionary scientist would appear to be among the possibilities of the future. It is something that may be true to the intention and ultimate achievement of history.

But if possible, it is mainly for those who have done nothing to bring it to pass. The founders of the United States had mostly labor and sorrow for their wages. The nobler freedom for which they fought and died was not for themselves but for their descendants. In the career of those who from 1861–65 redeemed the nation from its division and dishonor the same principle appears. Their achievement was not for themselves but for their posterity. It is admitted freely by candid scholars that the brief rule of Oliver Cromwell has permanently in-

fluenced for good the course of English history. English freedom has been a nobler thing since the days of the great Protector and more secure. The joy of this vast contribution to national well-being was hardly for the author of it; it was mainly for after ages. Luther's achievement is of great and permanent significance. Freedom of opinion is more indebted to him, perhaps, than to any other modern man. To him, for indispensable conditions of life, science is under everlasting obligations. For this inestimable service his reward was largely suffering. He inaugurated a new epoch, and left to other generations the joy of it. In the New Testament this fact is presented with surpassing impressiveness. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the heroism of the old dispensation is recalled, the faith and suffering which wrought for better things are recited, the idealism and the bitter disappointment and disaster of that whole high ancient world are noted, and the conclusion is that the vision alone was for the Hebrew, the fruition for the Christian. When Lord Roberts reviews his troops in London after the conquest of South Africa, his gallant son is not there; and many who did most to bring about the result are not there. Moses leads his people within sight of the land of promise; he gives them the discipline that fits them for possession; but the great leader himself dies

in the wilderness. And the question comes, How can there be a golden age, a happy condition for human beings, where the creators of it are unrequited and forgotten, where the fortunate ones are the undeserving?

The pain that results from an imperfect adjustment between the human organism and the environment is another difficulty in the way of optimism. To be sure the health of the race is largely in excess of its sickness; and yet the mass of sickness is far from inconsiderable; besides, the amount of discomfort that inevitably belongs to existence is of serious proportions. The law of heredity perpetuates this sad inequality. The incompletely equipped organisms of to-day represent in their melancholy privation the poverty and unfitness of a long ancestry of organisms. The physical improvement of mankind is certainly arrested by the self-perpetuating power of weakness. Every hospital and every insane asylum proclaim the presence in human society of an historic malady. If the New Jerusalem is a city without a hospital, if it involves ideal adjustments between man and nature, it is still a great way off.

Here should be noted, in order that pessimism may have fair play, the limit to the self-perpetuating power of wisdom and goodness. Aristotle dies; he leaves his works for the instruction

of mankind; but of his intellectual power he can make no bequest. Genius leaves behind it its wonderful expressions in science, art, philosophy, government, religion; but its power of insight and creation it cannot make over to the world. The loss involved in every generation through the intransmissibleness of intellectual and moral power is inconceivably great. Books, records, institutions, monuments, and other forms of influence are wonderful devices for reducing the loss to the world consequent upon the death of great men. Even these devices are poor when set beside the influence of the living intellect and character. The New Testament is great, but how poor it is in comparison with the living Christ. Its chief value is as an aid to recall him, to assist the mind to fashion some image of him, to enter into the presence thus recovered. Perhaps one may find in this bereavement of the race, particularly in the death of Jesus Christ, a new meaning in the conception of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

Unquestionably death is one of the hardest facts with which optimism has to deal. By itself it seems to me fatal. Death as a finality is the supreme sarcasm upon life. Everything withers in its presence; its shadow darkens the universe. It involves a contradiction of individual aptitude and desire such as to take the

heart out of life. It carries with it a sacrifice of affection that must, on the supposition of its finality, either paralyze or brutalize mankind. It is an engine for the destruction of human values and high moral worth so absolute in its operation as to create the denial of God, and to carry it into overwhelming power. Death as a finality is the *reductio ad absurdum* of all faith in the moral character of the universe, the exposure of the futility of optimism, the terrible irony that turns to vanity and nothingness man's best effort and spirit, the brutal power that quenches in the one black abyss of oblivion the treason of Judas and the love of Jesus. The complete statement of the negation of God and the worth of existence involved in death as a finality opens the door out of this horror. The point of extreme distress is the point of saving help. The annihilation of our human world cannot without protest be permitted. The conception that involves this annihilation cannot be valid. Whatever inverts the order of the world is thereby branded with discredit.

This rapid survey of the main difficulties in the way of hope for mankind would be incomplete without some notice of the moral failures of history. These are of two kinds. There are the failures that are chiefly due to deplorable social conditions; and there are the failures that

come from perversity. The children born in shame, the youth trained in the slums, the young manhood and womanhood upon whose minds are forced the standards of a base neighborhood, the toilers in the unfortunate departments of the great workshop of the world, the sufferers from injustice and neglect who first lose heart and then character, the multitudes for whom the merciless social environment proves too much, the tens of thousands who go to the wall from want of sympathy, the millions that are crushed out of existence by the sheer and awful sense of failure, meet the optimistic view of human history with silent and terrible contradiction. Those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and whom society leaves unvisited with light must regard the gospel of hope as the cruelest mockery. Man's inhumanity to man is still the ground upon which the character of the universe is arraigned. The despair that issues from the moral failure of man is a heavy indictment against society, and until this fountain of pessimism is stopped the vision of hope must be sadly clouded.

Deeper still is the failure through personal perversity. This presents a new kind of difficulty in the way of progress. There are the apparently irreclaimable wills that prevent all concord, that prohibit all peace. And when the

moral question is suppressed, and the human view is allowed to control attention, the case is not improved. The deepest source of human misery is in the will. It will be, as Schopenhauer has defined it, a purely selfish force, then will and egoism, and egoism and unhappiness are the same thing. Existence in its inmost nature thus becomes the wild assertion of individualism, the blind and terrible struggle to compass the impossible. Life is will, will is self-seeking, self-seeking is misery; therefore life is inevitable misery. Nothing is more impressive in modern thinking than this passionate and desperate arraignment of existence as evil. Nothing is more instructive to the preacher than this resolution of existence into will, and will into pure unmitigated egoism. The whole meaning of man's nature comes up anew for determination; and the question of life as will, and will as egoism, and egoism as wretchedness becomes full of hope when it calls up the counter question of the possible transformation of the will. If life is will, and if will may become love, and if love is joy, life itself must flow on in gladness and hope.

The question of optimism must make allowance for the personal equation. There are born optimists and born pessimists. They invert the nature of the chameleon; whatever lights upon

them takes the color of their feeling. One man counts up the joys of existence and they seem to him to amount to nothing. Even the best of life seems worse than non-existence. It is the Sophoclean view. The best thing is not to be at all; the second best is to cease to be as soon as possible. This mood perpetuates itself in the heart of comfort, in spite of the consciousness of genius, the sense of consequence in the world, and the foresight of fame. Doubtless the mood is in many ways influenced by the condition of society, by the mysterious order of human existence; but it has its origin from within. There is nothing in the circumstances of Swift's life to account for his melancholy habit of repeating upon the successive anniversaries of his birth the words of Job: "Let the day perish wherein I was born."[1] Nothing short of the personal attitude toward life can account for the exclamation of the apostle: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God: and such we are."[2] The optimism of Marcus Aurelius and the pessimism of Nero date from the inward man. Ecclesiastes tried all the great aspects of the egoistic life, and with the same conclusion of vanity and vexation of spirit. The point to be noted is that environment alone does not deter-

[1] Job iii. 3. [2] 1 John iii. 1.

mine the mood. Personal disposition is at the root of happiness and unhappiness. The children of the poor, ill-fed, ill-clad, and with but the minimum of outward comfort, are often happier over their mud-pies than the children of the rich over their vast toy shops. The appearances of the world are frequently delusive. Under the look of distress labor is often happy, while under the aspect of pleasure capital is often miserable. As Schopenhaur said, the secret of pessimism is in the human will. Nothing could be of deeper ethical importance than the penetrating discussions upon this subject of this great writer. They amount to the discovery of Milton's Satan, —

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

The German thinker has demonstrated once for all that will in his conception of it, that is, supreme and mad egoism, can be the basis only of an existence that goes from bad to worse, —

> "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
> And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep,
> Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,
> To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven."

The powerful and passionate insistence by Schopenhauer upon will as egoism, and egoism as evil, clears the way for the utilization in the new discussion of pessimism of the highest ethi-

cal insight of the past in combination with the scientific helps of the present. It is a fact that must not be passed unnoticed, that while one man growls at the universe in the bed of luxury, another sends up the shout: "I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."[1] A change of fortune is highly desirable for the majority of the race, and it would in all probability bring a large increase in happiness; but after all, the fundamental thing is disposition. John Bunyan in Bedford Jail is happier far than Charles the Second upon the throne of England. It is forever true that

> "The honest heart that 's free frae a'
> Intended fraud or guile,
> However fortune kick the ba'
> Has aye some cause to smile."

It is further true, according to the same authority, —

> "It 's no in titles nor in rank,
> It 's no in wealth like Lon'on Bank,
> To purchase peace and rest.
> It 's no in makin' muckle, mair;
> It 's no in books, it 's no in lear,
> To make us truly blest;
> If happiness hae not her seat
> An' centre in the breast,
> We may be wise, or rich, or great,
> But never can be blest!

[1] 2 Corinthians xii. 10.

Nae treasures nor pleasures
Could make us happy lang;
The heart aye 's the part aye
That makes us right or wrang."

There could not be a better statement of the relation to optimism of personal disposition. The whole question is vastly more than this; but this and its implications are the deepest aspect of the matter. It may be conceded to pessimism that if life is will, and will is egoism, existence is vanity. Further, one cannot be thankful enough for this radical analysis of pessimism. The vanity of existence "finds expression in the whole way in which things exist; in the infinite nature of time and space as opposed to the finite nature of the individual in both; in the ever-passing present moment as the only mode of actual existence; in the interdependence and relativity of all things; in the continual Becoming without ever Being; in constant wishing without ever being satisfied; in the long battle which forms the history of life, where every effort is checked by difficulties, and stopped until they are overcome."[1] The only serious count in this indictment against nature is in the clause, "in constant wishing without ever being satisfied." We are brought back to the great premise of pessimism: Life is will, will is egoism,

[1] *Studies in Pessimism*, p. 33.

egoism is misery. It is adequately met by the statement that this is not in any sense the proper life of humanity. The counter and genuine interpretation of existence is that life is will, and will is love, and love is joy. The wish of love forever exceeds the achievement of love; but the wish of the lover is divine, its excess is but the everlasting sunset in which the world is rolling forward. The deepest need of Schopenhauer was an old-fashioned conversion. That remedy would go far toward relieving the world of the gospel of despair; it would leave it without preachers, without a public, without a home. It would reduce it to the wholesome shadow of possible calamity that adds eagerness to man's quest for the secret place of the Most High and the shadow of the Almighty.

IV

The foundations of optimism in fact must now be considered. And the one great fact upon which it builds is the fact of progress. Things have been immeasurably worse than they now are. Granted that the ideal is nowhere in sight, the movement from the bad into the better cannot be denied. If the world is a patient, it is a convalescent patient. If this convalescence is continuous and increasing, hope of the largest kind is reasonable. And by hope

men are saved. The challenge of the poet is above reply: —

> "Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
> While the star of hope she leaves him?"

It is upon this solid basis of fact that the optimistic view of history takes its first stand.

Between the physical organism of man and his environment there is an increasing harmony. Natural selection means nothing less. The fittest survive and become the parents of the next generation, and the fittest are those between whom and environment there is the best adjustment. There is no reason why this adjustment should not go on. Fichte's idea that the cosmos and the human body are advancing each toward the other, that neither is completely made, that both are moving into a profounder reconciliation, would seem to be verified by scientific theory. The future is bright for the new nature and the new physical man. The health of the race as depending upon the ministry of nature would seem to be assured by the conception of natural selection. The best is yet to be for the human organism. Upon that physical perfection toward which history moves, optimism fixes her attention. The time may come when there shall be no more pain. It is completely possible that cosmos and organism should thus correspond;

and it is a scientific fact that progress toward this far-off goal is real and decided.

Natural selection is aided by science in moving toward the ideal adjustment of environment and organism. The science of sanitation is only in its infancy, and the available knowledge upon the subject is perhaps in no case put to full use. It is already within man's power to do much toward the transformation of environment. If all were done that could very well be done in this direction, one fountain of pessimism would at once run dry. The close connection between practical detail and high philosophical ideas is impressively felt, when one reflects that those who devise a better system of city sewage, who insist upon clean streets, who fight against the tenement pest, who in remodeling the older sections and in laying out the new provide width and opportunity for air and sunshine, and who seek to improve generally the sanitary condition, are nothing less than apostles of optimism. The reduction of the death rate is but one aspect of the subject. The increased vigor and happiness of the lives that survive in the bad condition is nearly equal in importance. Pessimistic moods and ideas are perhaps oftenest bred of low physical vitality. A robust person is in a hopeful way toward reaching a sound view of human existence. Unless devoted to unworthy ends,

good health cannot be unhappy. And the science that is supplementing the work of natural selection in bringing about a better adjustment between the human body and its environment is one of the mightiest advocates of Christian optimism. The results to be expected in this direction in the near future it would be difficult to exaggerate. Nature and science working together may yet produce a kind of organism which, while not bearing a charmed life, shall still be, so long as it endures, full of charm. Every achievement of science opens up into another greater possible achievement. It may be that biological and medical science is to be the great fulfiller of the ancient prophecy: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."[1] Every approach to that ideal condition is a blow in the face of pessimism. For it must be repeated that physical misery is one of the great sources of despair.

Improvement in the condition of labor is sure to come. There has been already great improvement. Within the nineteenth century hours of work have been regulated, and shortened from extremes of twelve and fourteen hours to eight. The continued introduction of machinery of higher productive power must tend to further reduction. The chief anxiety would seem to

[1] Isaiah xi. 9.

be not about the possibility of this change, but about the character which alone can make it a blessing. Wider intellectual interests, a taste for refined pleasures and amusements, and a distincter and stronger purpose for rectitude would seem to be essential to the advent of larger leisure for the multitudes, if it is to benefit them. This would appear to be a chief reason for the absence of philanthropic interest in the matter. Work under good conditions sufficient to absorb the strength of the workman is, in the absence of intellectual tastes and virtuous habits, a moral necessity. The main endeavor, therefore, must be to qualify the masses of men for the freedom that is sure to come; and the swifter the qualification is attained the speedier will the leisure be exacted.

An education for freedom is the great necessity of the time. Over-population is due to rampant animalism. The standard of comfort is set by ignorance and wretchedness. Intellectual and moral elevation will always limit reproduction. The school for the people is the supreme solicitude of the optimist. It has been in existence only for a brief period. Its character has never received the attention which its importance demands. Like all other good things it must struggle into recognition and favor. When it becomes what it might any day be-

come, what it is bound to become at no distant time, provision will be made for a new America, and a new America will be a vast help in bringing in a new world. The physical evils resulting from over-work, over-population, the standard of comfort that is set by ignorance and wretchedness will yield to the education that fits the masses of men for the new privilege. Nothing is hopeless for the disciple of Jesus Christ. A better economic condition has come; a better still is bound to come. So certain is this that the chief concern of the lover of his kind should be that the toiler shall be adequate to his freedom.

It must be remarked that under all its present severities the work of mankind is for the most part a source of moral vigor and hope. The virtue enshrined in the labor that keeps the human race alive is beyond all calculation. The heroism developed in the production and transportation of the commodities that support life is nothing less than sublime. The risk that the miner ignores, the exposure that trainmen and sailors scorn, the hardship that is encountered and laughed at in a hundred different lines of activity, the high hurdles over which men go with shouts of glee in the race of service, the defiance flung in the face of broiling heat and blinding cold by the multitudinous servants of

mankind, their fine disdain for space and time and tide and tempest, is one of the great sights of the world. And the fine thing about it is that work of this kind never thinks that it is heroic or in any way morally meritorious, that it is the supreme commonplace. Labor is the world-maker; capital and guiding intelligence are conditions. The true Atlas that walks and frisks with the world upon his shoulders is toil. This primary department of civilization is great in itself. In Kipling it has found an understanding heart and a noble voice. The best note in Kipling's poetry is the recognition of the worth for an empire of its humble and nameless servants, their unconscious heroism, and their fundamental manhood. Optimism is the note of Kipling's work because his work is inspired by the world's work. Pessimisms are not bred from the heart of the self-forgetful victorious workman; they spring from the mean compassions of the unprophetic spectator and from the meditations of disappointed and depraved egoism.

V

The deepest foundation of optimism is in faith. God's world-plan is the education of mankind; that is the great assumption of religious faith. In the light of this fundamental conception many things otherwise unaccountable

become plain. The world-plan of God seen and served secures joy and hope for all worthful souls. What men most need for a happy life is a cause worthy of their supreme devotion. The sufferings of the apostles of Christ were great; and yet in their writings they appear among the most joyous men who have ever lived. The designation of Jesus as a man of sorrows is one-sided; Goethe's description of Christianity as the worship of sorrow is but a half truth. As he appears in the Gospels Jesus is the most joyous person known to history. He has been able to impart to those who have followed him, and who have suffered most for their Christian discipleship, a joy of which nothing could bereave them. And if one shall inquire after the source of this joy in the suffering servants of righteousness, one shall find it to lie in their cause. It is this that has given them a peace above all earthly dignities. The vision of God's world-plan for mankind has been the joy set before them. In the strength of this vision they have been able to endure the cross and to despise the shame. Psalmist, prophet, apostle, martyr, and reformer, worthful men in all times and among all peoples, have seen some aspect of the kingdom of God, and in beholding and serving it, the God of peace and of hope has passed into their lives. Under the shadow of the Infinite,

chastened with its rebuke and exalted with its benignity, the men and women who have changed the world from glory to glory have lived. Their vision has been their solace, and their cause has been their comfort; their suffering devotion has been turned to joy. For the expulsion of pessimism we need goodness; the goodness that consists in the vision of God's world-plan, and in utter devotion to it.

Here too is the comfort of the weak. They are a sorrow to themselves. In their ignorance, in their moral failure, and in their weakness they can find only misery. But beyond them and including them is the educative purpose of God. Its greatness and richness surpass all imagination. To be under that process of education is a noble happiness, even if the result is mainly an intensified consciousness of weakness. The universe is thus conservative of the apparently worthless; it is dealing heroically with them that the worthful soul may be set free; it is raising within them reasonable expectations of an existence wrought over into a new creation. And along with this vision of the educative purpose of God for the individual life there is the sense of the world-process for the recovery of sight to the blind. History is seen to be inexorably just, and for this reason infinitely kind. Here again the cause is the source of endless

satisfaction. The weakness is the weakness of infancy; the process goes on that out of weakness makes men strong. More and more the presence of a just pity is felt in life, and more and more a just pity is seen at work in human civilization. There is a call away from the brute, and up to the full man; and the call is not entirely unanswered. The hope that wisdom and pity will be more and more potent in the organization of society is a reasonable hope. The faith that behind this larger organization of society in wisdom and pity is the prevailing action of the Infinite wisdom and pity is a reasonable faith. The joy that comes to the weak from the sense of the kingdom that includes their ideals, that covers their interests, that works for their exaltation, is a warrantable joy. In their cause they are prophetically complete. The evil of existence is overcome by experience and anticipation.

The perverse man is not unamenable to this illumination through life. Negative education is precious. It is often an indispensable preliminary to progress. A vast negation preceded the great utterance: "I know myself now." Indeed, much of the divine education is of this character; it is finally an availing protest against cherished selfishness, a conclusive demonstration of the insanity of the sinful life. And if that

is the larger part of the work of God with the majority of Christian people, it is not discouraging when we have to confess that it is nearly the whole achievement of God with the mass of mankind. It is a great thing to be convinced that the way of the transgressor is hard. It is much to have it demonstrated that the life without God is the life without hope. It is not unworthy of the Eternal spirit to reason wrongdoing into the ground, to reduce egoism to the sense of its fatuity, to expose the impossible hope of the loveless soul, to obstruct the path to moral perdition by an overwhelming negation.

This is the discipline to which individual perversity is subjected; the operation of this relentless kindness is seen throughout the social whole. Each generation makes for itself the immemorial discovery that the wages of sin is death, and that the recompense of high fidelity is eternal life. The great commonplace of ethical experience is that he who saves his life shall lose it, and that he who loses his life shall find it. This paradox of being, this immemorial discovery of individuals and generations, is bound to tell upon the coming race. The ancient blunder of self-seeking will not always be repeated; the joy of existence will not forever be sought for, against the whole protest of the past, in impossible fields. Light will, in the overwhelm-

ing majority of cases, be welcome, and darkness will be disowned. And in the cases of fierce perversity the great negation of the loveless life will be repeated with a certainty and an emphasis that cannot be unavailing. If good men take their chief joy in God's world-plan for mankind; if, when they are paid in outward suffering and calamity for their great service, they still find inexpressible solace in their cause; if the weak become oblivious of their affliction through trust in the Infinite pity that remembers them and that works for them, and if perverse men are finally driven into the consciousness that egoism is the ideal of the fool, — optimism is a faith that has good foundations.

On this question of optimism, science gives facts and tendencies in the physical and social life of man; faith gives a history of the victorious soul, a record of its endeavor to bring the unbelieving world into its own light and peace, and an insight into the world-plan of the Infinite educator of human beings. These are the facts; these are the prevailing tendencies; these are the spiritual experiences and endeavors of the world's life; and this is its best insight. Here we rest the case of historical optimism. When we confine the vision to the history of man on this earth, the facts are still facts, the tendencies are still tendencies, the spiritual

peace and power are still valid, and God's world-plan is still the best account of what we see and of what it is reasonable to hope for. It is true that we cannot define the issue of earthly history. It had a beginning; some time it may have an end. What the history of man upon this planet will be when the record is complete, it is impossible even to guess. Infinite possibilities of disaster exist; infinite possibilities of high character and happiness also exist; and in the historic process to-day we behold at work forces that slowly eliminate the evil possibilities, and that slowly realize the good possibilities. That condition of human society may not be all that one could wish; it is the opportunity of heroism and the warrant of hope.

Here we might leave the subject. The life of man after he leaves this earth might be ignored. We have been dealing with the outlook for time. Why venture upon the outlook beyond time? First, because death is the chief support of pessimism. Second, because human history on earth must ever remain incomplete. Death must be transcended if optimism is to live; and time must be held to be but the earliest epoch of man's endless career. For this second contention we find warrant in the soul. The cry of the psalmist is true to the soul, individual, social, historic, racial: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake,

in thy likeness." Kant's counsels of perfection are a genuine rendering of the human conscience. The moral law calls for the perfect man, for the perfect society; and to meet this call from within, it is reasonable to assume time from above. For an endless task there must be an endless opportunity. Plato's "vision of all time and all existence" has its function here. The history of the soul and of the society of souls is in the visible and yet more in the invisible. In the presence of the full career of man as he stands in this Platonic vision, his life upon the earth is insignificant indeed. It is impossible that it should appear to be anything great.[1] Scientific optimism should become philosophic optimism; the horizons that are fixed for science should be transcended by the boundless outlook of philosophy. And it is here impossible not to recall the words of the Sovereign teacher upon the meaning of human existence: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[2] Than that ideal there could be nothing more hopeless or absurd if for man there is no history beyond this world.

God's world-plan for the education of mankind discounts the importance of death. For it death is abolished; for it there is no death. It

[1] *Republic*, Book vi. p. 486 A. B.
[2] Matthew v. 48.

involves with its own reality the immortality of man. In the presence of this plan all men are one.

We are one in origin, in fortune, and in destiny. The ideas of justice and of solidarity should control faith here. The better civilization of the world and its hope is the result largely of unrequited service. What has become of those heroic servants of man? They saved others, themselves they could not save. Is, therefore, extinction of being the way in which the universe rewards its best servants? The justice of the universe is here at stake, and one who feels that the sense of justice is the best gift to man from his Maker will not lightly conclude that his Maker has given his conscience entirely away. When we hold God to justice we hold him by the supreme distinction which he has conferred upon human beings. And it is easy to see that if the past is incomplete without the better future into which it is to be resolved, the better future itself needs for its integrity a real union with the past that has made it possible. The purpose of goodness that works itself out in history is the ground of hope not only for time but also for eternity. That purpose honors the great ideas of justice and solidarity. It is but just, and it is in line with the social nature of man, that somewhere, somehow, and at some time the

sower and the reaper should rejoice together. The statement that this cannot be, owing to the connection between the individual mind and the physical organism, is simply idle chatter in the face of victorious goodness working through history. All that is essential to the self-consistency of victorious goodness must be assumed to be possible. As Renan said that forty years of labor and meditation had merely enabled him to arrive at conclusions at which "a street Arab arrives off-hand,"[1] so it may be asserted that the deepest student of the connection of mind and body knows as much about their *ultimate* relation as the peasant, and no more. Objections to the ethical argument for immortality founded upon ignorance deserve no more deference to-day than they received from Butler in his time. One who has for the thousandth time gone over the universally accessible evidence for the close correspondence of mind and organism, repeating to one's self of faith in immortality, "How can these things be?" comes at length to suspect that one is a logical fool. In an ethical world ignorance of the final value for the soul of brain organization can hardly count as an argument against a future life for man. Too much deference to ignorance in one direction and too

[1] Brunetière, *Manual of the History of French Literature*, p. 521.

little respect for knowledge in another is the source of the greater part of modern doubt over future existence. Upon this subject, the moral world in which every true man lives has the right to the last word. Over against the physiologist's ignorance the moralist sets his knowledge; and it would seem to be only sane to trust the august moral world that one knows rather than the physical world that one does not know.

It has been said that the function of the Platonic myth is to cover with the forms of imagination realities either inaccessible to the process of reason or insufficiently apprehended by reason. Every subject becomes infinite, and when the subject under consideration is a fundamental human interest, it is natural, and perhaps not unfitting, in the last resort, to fall back upon the poetry of faith. Optimism looks for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. It lives in the vision of the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. It believes that the tabernacle of God is with men. This is the first interest of optimism. The fortune of mankind on this earth is its great primary concern; and its note of hope is held for the sake of faith in the Maker of man, and as the availing inspiration in all high and serious work for man, no less than as warranted, at least in a chastened form, by the

fact of human progress. It is this primary interest of optimism that guards its ethical value. Mere expectation of a happier future for mankind on this earth is of little service. An unethical optimism is hardly other than a calamity. There are those who cry peace when there is no peace. It is forever true that there is no peace for the wicked. If wickedness cannot be expelled from the spirit and life of mankind the expectation of a happier future is idle. Better a thousand times the stern ethics of the despairing prophet than the concealed decay, the gilded corruptions, the whited sepulchres of the conscienceless dreamer. All the legitimate hopes of man are bound up with the struggle for righteousness. If the struggle for social righteousness is vain, optimism is vain. If social righteousness is, all things considered, a growing interest, a gaining cause, an invincible force, optimism is justified. It is the vision of the exalted humanity in the happier environment, — the angel of the apocalyptic writer standing in the sun, — in the strength of which the arduous duty of the day and the hour is done.

This, however, is not the end. The poetry of faith goes beyond time. It views as one the church militant and the church triumphant.

> "Part of the host have crossed the flood
> And part are crossing now."

In the New Testament, time and eternity are never definitely separated, human history here and beyond death. In one of the greatest writings of the New Testament the author, after noting immense progress in faith and in opportunity, blends the present with its privilege in the fellowship of the Eternal. "Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel."[1] The vision of the Eternal God, the risen, ascended, and reigning Master, the commonwealth of the brave and pure in the unseen, in fellowship with whom the community of believers on earth forever stands, is a vision that accords with the deepest necessities of faith. The discipline of mankind is continued in the invisible. The ideals of humanity have their perfect realization in the Eternal. The solidarity of the race, on earth and in heaven, is the fundamental truth of our human world. The ground of hope is in him who reveals the nature of man and of God, who discovers in himself the goodness and the

[1] Heb. xii. 23.

severity of the Father, and who interprets in the interest of mankind the awful process of judgment by which the universe is purified and glorified. "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire."[1]

[1] Hebrews xii. 28.

CHAPTER VII

THE RELIGIOUS ULTIMATE: JESUS CHRIST

I

In the study of Jesus Christ the fitting attitude of mind is of serious moment. It is not generally seen, even among teachers and investigators, that the process of the intellect depends for its validity not only upon scientific method, but also upon purity of motive. Prejudice can distort the whole method and process of science, and in the name of science conduct to the barren and foregone conclusion. The absence of the proper interest, in the treatment of a fundamental question, is likewise fatal. It is often observed of writers that they are not at home in their subjects. Through want of adequate learning or discipline or interest they are in a foreign land. And even when the learning and the discipline are sufficient, if the fundamental and native impulse is wanting, these writers are still hopeless foreigners. Scientific method must complete itself in the integrity that belongs alone to the pure in heart.

It is a sound remark that piety without intel-

ligence is a peril to religion. It is apt to issue in fanaticism. It is likely to define in an unnatural way the spirit and the scope of religion. It is nearly sure to put a fixed gulf between the mood in which a man worships God and the mood in which he is to associate and work with men. Piety without intellect is the opportunity of the impostor, both orthodox and heterodox. It is the gunpowder for the fire of the abuser and blasphemer of great human interests. Noble, elementary feeling, standing apart from the intellect, and unserved by it, has wrought upon the soul of religion inconceivable outrage. It was this history of outrage that led the governing philosophers in France and in Great Britain in the eighteenth century to regard religion as little less than a disease and scourge. This discipline in extreme opinion has resulted, after much wandering, in the conclusion that no feeling, no interest is complete, without the service of the intellect. It must be understood in order to come to its best, it must pass through the purifying fires of intelligence, find its relation to other interests, come to a knowledge of itself and its place in human nature through the service of the reason.

But if piety without intellect is one peril of religion, it is equally true that intellect without piety is another peril of religion. There is in-

deed no choice between the evils of a great interest not understood and misunderstood. In the one case, there is no attempt to know, to exalt, to use lawfully the great interest; in the other, there is the evil done to religion by the understanding that works without genuine sympathy with religion. After all that has been said in praise of it, the critical spirit is good only in so far as it springs from fear to believe a lie. The critical spirit is a method for maintaining intellectual uprightness; it implies the love of truth and the most serious devotion to it. The critical spirit thus born shows itself only incidentally in destruction; its great distinction is discovery and appreciation. If the object is truth the best path to it is sympathy. Intellectual wariness is not only compatible with sympathy; in its highest development sympathy is essential to it. In the eyes of his Sistine Madonna, Raphael has depicted the consciousness of infinite possession and infinite solicitude. The last thing to be imposed upon is intelligent and noble maternity. The critical spirit is there in supreme incisiveness because it is tempered, edged, and used by love. Christian discipleship at its best is supremely critical because it is supremely devoted to reality. The devotion is primary, the appreciation is the main interest; the negative process is an intellectual device in the service

of the heart. At its best the believer's study of Jesus Christ is the most authentic, not only because he alone commands the facts, but also because he has the deepest desire to reach the truth and nothing but the truth. The expert's criticism on the seaworthiness of a ship becomes much more anxious and severe when the ship is in a gale, and the expert's family are on board. When Paul said, "I know whom I have believed," he gave expression to a result obtained by the searching criticism of love. He had a great stake in the trustworthiness of his Master, and he had taken the utmost pains to reach the fact. In the Gospels Jesus appears as lover and judge. His character as lover of men fits him, and indeed compels him, to be their severest judge. And the awful criticism of love that a man finds applied to himself when he opens his New Testament, he is in duty bound to apply to the central person there. Only let it be the criticism of love, the appreciation that advances passionately and warily, the sympathy that is insight and receptivity and that cannot be mocked, and great results must follow. The last person to take words for power, the show of relief for actual deliverance, is the man who identifies truth and life. One may as well expect the Syrophœnician mother to be satisfied with anything less than the heal-

ing of her child. The spectator may be made to believe that the semblance is the reality, but the sufferer never. Criticism of Jesus Christ is not new; he was the subject of it from his baptism to his ascension. The criticism of need, and of love, he did not deprecate; rather he inspired it, as in the case of Nicodemus, and made it more profound. The criticism that he condemned was that of the Pharisee, the criticism that was a cover for prejudice. Nowhere is it more essential than here that the modern student should be upon his guard. The criticism of love means life; the criticism that is a learned concealment of aboriginal antagonism and cultivated bias is a movement away from truth. Study your man, consider your critic, get at the inmost spirit and motive of your adverse writer; in the sphere of moral truth the man is always determinative of his work and its worth.

The school of Christ is the place where judgment is ripened into something like adequacy. Christian discipleship should precede Christian apostleship. The Master is too great to be made the subject of extemporaneous judgment. The magnitude of Jesus calls for reverent appreciation. The easy manner in which Jesus and his teaching are considered by a certain class of negative writers, the high assurance of complete ability to comprehend Christianity and its Founder

with which they write, the monstrous assumption with which they proceed to indicate the limitations and the defects in the thought of Christ, are a melancholy revelation of incurable incompetence. There is in this mood total insensibility to the majesty of Jesus in human history. Jesus has been so much to mankind that any scholar with ordinary historic imagination and common intellectual decency must uncover in his presence. It is but homage to reality to confess the transcendent greatness of Jesus, and to study him in any other mood is sheer impertinence. The great teachers of mankind have won the right to our deference. We do not fear to test them; but we fear to test them except in the consciousness of their immeasurable significance. Shakespere, Dante, Homer, must be approached in this way; otherwise the critic is ridiculous. His opportunity is to know men who knew life vastly better than he knows it. The great thinkers of mankind command this homage. Their size should save them from impertinence. Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Berkeley, Hume, and Hegel have worlds of wisdom in them; and if that wisdom has limitations, these can best be discovered by the patient and reverent learner. Criticism in general is poor because it is ignorant, and again because it proceeds from a mean spirit. Learning wide

and deep is essential to worthy judgment, and learning that sees beyond it the untraveled heights of its alluring subject. The world is tired of manufactured Christologies, whether orthodox or heterodox. The notice served upon the Christian thinker is: Get your facts; then try, if you can, to compass their meaning; admit as the supreme fact the immeasurableness of the Master; and let this influence not only the intellectual conclusion, but also imagination and feeling. The preachers who most truly present their Master are the men in whose imagination and feeling lies the image of his unlimited significance for human life. Dogmatic conclusions concerning Jesus Christ are nearly a necessity for the philosophic student; but even this student is comparatively powerless as a teacher until the subject of his opinion transcends opinion, until it calls to the deepest in humanity, —

> "Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
> And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors:
> And the King of glory shall come in."[1]

The significance of Jesus for the religious need is the proper subject of philosophic thought; but the thought is mad that does not confess the incomprehensible greatness of that significance. Even on a naturalistic conception of the character of Jesus, the fact remains of his unique and

[1] Psalm xxiv. 7.

immeasurable greatness. The reflection in imagination and feeling of that fact is sufficient to insure reverence and docility in his presence. Charles Lamb spoke for authentic historic fact when he said to a company of friends, "If Shakespere should appear here, we should all rise, but if He should appear we should all kneel."

II

Christology is a human question, and its chief form is this: What is the value of Jesus Christ for the religious life of mankind? And the basis for the true answer to this question is in the Christian life. Discipleship is a process of moral experimentation. Historic discipleship is historic experimentation expressing itself in results that gain in clearness and certainty. The total power of the cause is not given in the incomplete effect; still the testimony of the effect is positive and may be prophetic.

The first witness for Christ is the psalm of the individual disciple. Hebrew words are filled with the new wine of Christian experience, —

> "Come, and hear, all ye that fear God,
> And I will declare what he hath done for my soul." [1]

This testimony strengthens itself in the larger witness of history: Hear what the Lord has done for other souls. At this point an important

[1] Psalm lxvi. 16.

discrimination is made. Christ has meant most to the greatest souls. Paul and John, Origen and Augustine, Luther and Edwards, Maurice and Bushnell, Channing and Brooks, surely were among the greatest in their religious endowment. The supreme significance of Christ to them is fundamentally important. In this way, from personal testimony to historical, from historical witness to that of the great spiritual leaders of the modern world, the conclusion is reached that Jesus Christ has a message for the world, that he himself is the world's incomparable spiritual possession. Thus the believer arrives at his matured conviction, living as he is in the quest for the best, and in the open competition of the religious world.

The verdict of historic discipleship is thus the basis upon which some insight may be obtained into Christ's character. Other great religious teachers have laid powerful hold upon human life. In order to exalt Jesus, it is wholly unnecessary to degrade them. But for those who hold that life is good, that moral achievement is the great note of normal man, that human relations — domestic, social, national, and racial — are the enduring and precious organism of existence, that under all, and in all, and over all is the love of God with whose conscience and heart our entire humanity is forever implicated, there

can be no teacher like Jesus Christ. For him life is good. For him the relational life of mankind is existence. Society illumined and inspired by love is his conception of normal human existence. For him there is the coming of the Infinite holiness and joy into society. Our human world, in his sight, is vast, precious, full of illimitable promise. He lives, he dies, that his kingdom may come; and his kingdom is conservative of human life, it retains all by purifying and perfecting all. According to Jesus the substance of existence is divine; his aim is to redeem it from abuse, and to fill it with the grace that consecrates and completes it. The Buddhist pleads for the holy life; but with him existence is misery, and his ideal is the beatitude of extinction. Paralysis is upon the heart of Indian civilization. Social progress is no part of Indian experience, no part of Indian dreams. Science in the true sense of the word there is none. Among the Hindus, effective social organization there is none; universal education there is none; the achievements in science, in philosophy, in government, in institutional life that distinguish the west, are not found in the east. Profound and disordered metaphysical dreamings constitute those huge systems of opinion. Imagination takes the place of intellect, prejudice of conscience, endless brooding of will. The touch

of peculiar climate is in all this; the deeper influence of immemorial pessimism is also in it all. So long as the ideal is extinction of being by the path of holiness, Jesus Christ must seem inferior to their own great teacher; but we who hold that this ideal is false, who set up as our goal life in the path of service inspired by love, must place our Master immeasurably above the best.

The supremacy of Jesus among the religious teachers of mankind rests upon the verdict of life. One can predict the universal and final rejection of Christianity only as one shall forecast the universal and final denial of the will to live. Universal and permanent pessimism alone can succeed in relegating the Gospel of Christ to an inferior position. Because the desire for life is deep and ineradicable, because it prevails more and more wherever existence is normal, Christianity is bound to become the religion of the world. Victorious and passionately aspiring life can never rest long under the shadow of a pessimistic gospel. The leader for an achieving humanity is he who came to give the more abundant life. No teacher so identifies his cause with life as Jesus does. As healer, as prophet, as personal influence, as man of faith and of works, his whole power is directed upon human society to turn it into a vast and vital

joy. Upon a theistic interpretation of the universe, and an optimistic view of history, Jesus is the incomparable religious leader. Wherever the instinct of life is imprisoned, there he is confessed as the supreme deliverer; wherever the desire for life prevails, there the Master of the Christian world is recognized as rightful king; and if humanity as a whole shall rise into the passion for the highest kind of life, we may be sure that humanity will choose as its Lord, Jesus Christ. For the race that wants to live, there is among religious teachers no rival to him.

The power to renew the desire for life belongs to Christ in a wholly incomparable way. All human interests flourish where the Gospel goes. The disciples of Jesus became possessed with the joy and the hope of being. The good tidings were uttered from the heart of exultant manhood. Trial and sorrow became discipline, that is, a severe process for the expansion and exaltation of existence. The first revival that followed the presence of Jesus in Galilee and in Judæa was a revival of the desire to live. The surprise of being was the great primal inspiration that came from him. Men paused and wondered over the reversal of despair. In his presence the contempt of life died out; the sigh of distress for relief in death was abolished. The hum of human interests became universal;

men forgot their unbelief in the new and absorbing passion for life with which Jesus filled the land. The crowds of sick that were brought to him, the multitudes that followed that they might hear him speak, the parents who sought him for their sons and daughters, and the masters who plead with him in behalf of their servants, the mothers who prayed for his blessing upon their children, and the rulers, like Nicodemus, who were fascinated into discipleship, all tell the same story. Life can become a new and an amazing interest, and Jesus was the great inspirer of the prophetic passion. The contempt of existence has never been able to live where Christ lives. Wherever he has gone he has filled his disciples with the surprise of being. The angel that men entertain unawares is their humanity. Wordsworth speaks for the whole brotherhood of believers when he sings: —

> "Thanks to the human heart by which we live."

The normal interests of man, inspired and sustained by Jesus Christ, are the greatest forces in the world, and they are its inalienable joys. Henry Ward Beecher said that the ministry should be a band of music. Deeper still is the power of the Gospel. It creates a concert in the human heart that never ceases, that takes up into itself the whole pathos of existence and

blends it with the governing voices of joy, making them softer and richer, making it a solace and sanctity.

The Christian assurance of endless life is a testimony to the unique power of Christ. Normal life doubtless desires to go on, and it naturally builds heavens into which it is to enter at death. But nowhere is the strength of the desire for endless existence so tremendous as in the Christian community. Life is love, and love is full of joy, and not to long with utmost sincerity and intensity for permanence would be an incredible mood. Christ has made being so full of surprise and joy and hope that the generations under him have eagerly accepted his assurance of life after death. Whether the conception of immortality be valid or not, the consonance of it with the human heart, as that heart is touched and stirred by Christ, is a new witness to the Master's power to make existence supremely desirable. And while he thus appeals to the desire for life, renews it where it has failed, and fills it with an endless ideal and hope, it must be repeated that the verdict of life is a verdict for the sovereign and incomparable worth of Jesus Christ as the religious leader of mankind. The exalted genius of Buddha avails nothing in his competition with Jesus. We place these teachers side by side.

We hear Buddha say that existence is desire, that desire is egoism, that egoism is misery, and that the highest hope of man is the hope of extinction. The noble ethical discipline that becomes the only path to the peace of nothingness must be estimated in the presence of the goal to which it is adjusted, in the presence also of the universe which makes this goal the highest human beatitude. We hear Buddha speak, and the whole life of our world is against him. He is exalted, he is gracious, he is full of indescribable pity, he is benign; but he is, from our point of view, the victim of an immeasurable and a hideous mistake. We hear Jesus say that existence is desire, that desire is ordained of God to become love, that love is pure and glorious joy, and that his mission is to fill humanity with love that it may be filled with worth and joy. Here our world is with Jesus. All believers in life, all reformers of life, all idealists for life, and the whole soul of our civilization, side with Jesus. And once more it must be said that for the world that wants to live, to live worthily, royally, and endlessly there is no rival in leadership to Jesus Christ.

III

The verdict of Jesus Christ concerning himself is of chief importance. A complete in-

duction is not here in place; a single typical instance is sufficient. Jesus says of himself "I am the light of the world."[1] In the simplest and at the same time the most unmistakable way, these words set forth his claim to be the religious ultimate for mankind. As the new Jerusalem has twelve gates opening into its interior splendor so there are many approaches to the soul of Christ. He is the bread of heaven, the water of life, the resurrection and the life, the good shepherd, the vine, the way, the truth, and the life, the son of man, and the son of God. These self-characterizations, and others like them that might be named, are avenues to the vision of the Master's spirit. But the comparison of himself to the light is perhaps the most significant; at least, in this discussion, it is the most convenient. And the first thought implied in the comparison is the immense practicalness of the Gospel. The light is for sight and service. It brings into clearness the abiding order of the material world, and it animates man to his task in that world. Light presupposes reality; its primary function is revelation and inspiration. Christianity assumes the independent reality of God's moral world in humanity. It implies that that world is from of old, and that it is everlasting. Its

[1] John viii. 12.

first office is to make it visible, and to induce men to live in it. The moral world that is the analogue of the material, it covers with its illumination, and cultivates with its inspiration. Christianity is preëminently a religion for this world; above all it is a religion for business. It is primarily for seeing and serving. In it man first finds himself. The appetites and passions and reason and conscience and will that compose man's life are organized in truth. The magnitude and value of the soul, the family, the nation, history, and humanity discover themselves here as nowhere else. The material, domestic, social, political, scientific, and human interests of the race shine as different aspects of one vast whole. That whole is our human world, and that human world is a moral world. And from the Gospel a tide of light passes over the face of society, and a new motive goes into the higher endeavor of man. The true perspective of existence and the cunning hand of the artist are the gift of Christianity. The light that reveals the reality of the world, in which men plough and sow and reap and carry on the thousand activities of existence; the light that when it is present puts out every other, and that when it is absent is still the standard and incitement for the invention of substitutes, is the great parable for the revealing and inspiring function

of Christ. To withdraw from the higher endeavor of mankind the influence of the Gospel would be like a final sunset. The moral world would still be here, but it would be without its Divine interpreter. Outside of Christianity the moral order is a world in darkness; and that means blindness and stupidity. The vision and the service that mean life for mankind are in a pathetic sense limited to Christendom. Man is seen, appreciated, understood, inspired, and served only in the luminous atmosphere of Christian truth and love. To lose the memory of the Gospel would be to forget the true aspect of society, and the inspiration by which it is genuinely served.

From Christianity as the divine condition of moral industry, it follows that in the life of the world it is both conscious and unconscious. It is the master light of all our seeing; yet revelation and inspiration are often lost in the order discovered and the impulse to serve it. The thoughts and feelings and purposes that make possible the best life of mankind are rarely traced to their true source. The spiritual outfit for service is simply accepted; it is here as the light is here; and as the farmer follows his plough, and the sailor steers his ship unconscious of the illumination that conditions the effort, so men work in the sphere of the spirit. The im-

mense moral health of mankind, and the amazing moral service from man to man that every day records are the witnesses to a mighty unconscious Christianity. Once for all a large section of human interest lies in the light of the Gospel. Men think of themselves and of their fellow-men under the power of Christian inheritance and environment. It is the old phenomenon repeated upon a grander scale. "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."[1] The integrity of the world is yet in its instinctive stage; and the best lives are far from self-comprehending. They move in forces of whose scope and character and origin they take but slight account. To the Christian morality of the world there is an unconscious side. Men cast out demons by the power that they do not trace to its source. The failure in faith of the man who is a hero in duty should be the commonplace that it is. He is simply the busy farmer who never sees the light in which he works. The Christian thinker should be the broadest and most hopeful. The man to whom Christ is the light of the world should set great store upon the moral industry that Christ makes possible, and little upon verbal or even scientific admiration. The believer cannot be too thankful for the multitudes who in a real way do Christ's will "and know it not."

[1] Genesis xxviii. 16.

However, it is but natural that consciousness should gain upon unconsciousness, reflection upon instinct, a reasoned faith upon an intuitive. The light passes through crises. Daybreak and sundown are such, and the beginning and the end of Christian discipleship are usually marked epochs. Sad sometimes they are, like Kipling's dawn of thunder, mournful as the wreck of day at its close; yet for the multitude of devout disciples the beginning is the blush of the Infinite and the end a banner of fire. The crises through which Christian discipleship passes serve to arrest its thought and send it upward to the source of its insight and love. Character in the making is a constant crisis. The more will there is in the moral process, the more sense is there of friend and foe. The point of deliberate and forced moral gain is a kind of Niagara. The roar is perpetual, the conflict unceasing, the phenomenon something whose grandeur and momentousness custom can in no wise lessen. The strong temptation, the perplexing task, the growing need of vision and motive, the sense of dissatisfaction with the work done, the adverse judgment upon life, the new tide of aspiration, the sorrow and the hope, are the crises in the day of the Lord which awakens thought and turns the eager mind full upon the great Master.

Next to the practicalness of Christianity is

the beauty of it. Whatever may be said of its truth, no one can deny the beauty of Christ's thought of God and man, human fellowship here and hereafter. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the sovereign æsthetic wonder. The student of ordinary sensibility is arrested at every step by the scenery. The range of the insight is no more remarkable than the quality. The Sermon on the Mount has the beauty of truth. The ethical seeds from the Old Testament become under Christ's touch a world of full-grown and finished loveliness. Morality ceases to be mechanical, ceases even to be stern; it sinks into divine depths and soars away to infinite heights. It becomes as great and beautiful as the life of God. This unlimitedness and perfection of the moral life as conceived by Christ, especially in the Sermon on the Mount, is an unspeakable appeal to the sense of beauty. The Parables continue this appeal. They are beautiful forms for the world's most beautiful thought. God as Jesus thought of him is a being of overwhelming beauty. There is no image anywhere for this splendor of the mind of Christ. Nothing in the extant intellectual or spiritual possessions of mankind can match the idea of the God and Father of Jesus Christ. Probably the best of that thought is still beyond the deepest and most sympathetic study. One can only dream of

what it would be to entertain Christ's vision of the Infinite. The symbols are here, the Greek characters and sentences, the Gospels surrounded by the best learning of the world. And under these symbols, like a divine presence, waits the vision of God and of man, out of which came the Christian religion.

Christ himself is the chief part of his gospel. Again in the category of beauty everything ranks below Christ. The ineffable loveliness is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. From advent to ascension, in act and thought, in public ministry and in private fellowship, from the beginning to the end there is the same surpassing beauty of character. And as those who work in the light come to see and to love it, as light becomes not only the indispensable condition of industry but an open fountain of joy, so the world that is learning to think of itself in the glory of Christ is more and more coming to discern the revealing splendor and to rejoice in it. If it cannot be doubted that in his use of light as the comparison for his life, Jesus thought first of the indispensable utility of his religion, it is equally certain that next to that he must have placed its ministry to the sense of beauty. The moral refinement of Christianity at its best, compared with Stoicism at its best, has its explanation here. Refinement is a constant note

in genuine Christianity. The vision of Christ is ultimately incomparable with brutality. The little child is again in the midst of society, and the truth and delicacy of feeling in it are a symbol of that which is inseparable from the substance of the Gospel. Fatherhood and motherhood, human nature and its great forces, have been immensely modified by the grace of Christ. To the condition of the world's best work we must add, when we think of Christ, the source of its grace. If Christianity is supreme for its utility, it is again supreme for its æsthetic value.

The finality of the Gospel grows out of Christ's comparison. For its own purpose there is nothing better than light. Light at its best is the final thing in that line. One can ask for nothing other, for nothing higher, for nothing more. The world rolling in the flood of light is in that aspect of it absolutely perfect. And beyond the teaching of Jesus thought cannot go. A God better than the Father of Christ is for man inconceivable. A diviner interpretation of human existence than that of Christ is unimaginable. The great ideas of Christ — the kingdom of God, eternal life, the universe as essentially moral, truth as ultimately personal in man, in Christ himself, and in God, — represent not only the highest reach of spiritual intelligence,

but also the height that has no beyond. Anything better than the Gospel is simply inconceivable. A higher or greater spirit than Jesus Christ is unthinkable. It is no unimportant service of the higher criticism that it has made possible the discovery of the immeasurable improvement that Christ was upon Hebrew idealism. Until the present generation the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament were filled with a Christian content; and it was supposed that the greater prophets had definite conceptions of Jesus, and that six or seven hundred years before his birth they supplied the world with an outline biography of him. It is now seen, or at least it is now possible to see, the infinite surprise that Jesus was to his people. Hebrew idealism points toward him; he is its consummate expression; but he is beyond the fair interpretation of its utmost dream. His kingdom is other and infinitely greater than the kingdom of the prophets, than the kingdom of John the Baptist. In teaching and in character Christ is the highest word and the best act of God to man. Christ is the best conceivably that man can be; the best that God can do in man. He is, therefore, at once the highest revelation of God, and the sovereign example for man.

IV

The value of Christ for the world may be said to consist in the perfection of his religious consciousness. The consciousness of Christ is a phrase in current use, and it is an inevitable phrase. It is, nevertheless, somewhat ambiguous. It may mean the believer's sense of his Master's presence, as in fulfillment of the promise "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"[1] Here it signifies Christ as he is wrought into the thought and feeling of the disciple; it stands for the consciousness of the Christian. And it is needless to say that this is a profoundly important meaning of the words. The translatableness of the mind of the Master into the mind of the disciple is a cardinal truth of Christian faith. The Christian consciousness is modeled on the consciousness of Jesus Christ; it aims at the reproduction in living men of the spiritual distinction of Jesus; its ideal is the continuous and ever ascending repetition of the faith and love of the Lord. The writings of the New Testament are full of the witness to this continuous and increasing presence of Christ in the consciousness of his disciples. Christ is born within them the hope of glory. There is an identification between Master and

[1] Matthew xxviii. 20.

servant as in the vine and the branches. Believers die with him in his death, and they rise with him in his resurrection. This transfiguration of mental being in the radiance of the Lord's presence, this transfusion of the soul of Christ through the soul of the Christian, is one of the great notes of apostolic literature. And it does not end with the apostolic age. Mystic literature is never absent, and it testifies to the same high experience. The early hymns and prayers, passages in the "Confessions" of Augustine, the "Imitation of Christ," the sermons of Tauler, Luther's joy in the idea of justification by faith, much of the "Religious Affections" of Edwards, much in the writings of F. D. Maurice, and a constant note in all genuine Christian experience attest the fundamental and permanent character of the claim that the mind of Christ is reproducible in the mind of his sincere and devout disciple.

Indeed this view of the consciousness of Christ is primary. Unless the mind of Christ is essentially translatable into human thought, it becomes inaccessible; a reality it may be, but a reality beyond all possible experience and forever unknowable. But to contend that nature is knowable only as it is translated into human thought does not make nature merely subjective. Nature is known through the social conscious-

ness, through the historic consciousness of man, and yet nature is other and more than that consciousness. It is the object of experience, present in human experience and yet regulative of it, and going infinitely beyond it. It is known; it is knowable; and still it is forever ahead of knowledge. It is the Infinite approaching the mind of the race through the senses, intelligible through and through, and at the same time, for the human intellect, forever unexhausted and inexhaustible. To contend that the consciousness belonging to Jesus Christ is knowable is not to make it wholly subjective; it is not to identify it with the consciousness belonging to Christian men of any generation or of all the generations. The Christian consciousness is created and sustained by Christ; it is the continuous witness for his permanent presence in human society. But while known through the consciousness of his disciples the consciousness belonging to the Lord is other and infinitely greater than that belonging to his people. Of their mind his is the basis, of their vision his soul is object; he compels attention, as nature does, by the variety and the incessancy of his appeal; his ineffable mental content creates and orders and commands the mental content of those who follow him.

The consciousness of Christ is thus the sover-

eign object of Christian thought. It means the content of the soul of Jesus Christ in its relation to his Father and in relation to man individual and social. To recover the vision that lived in that supreme spirit is the highest aim of man. To enter the sacred circle of light, and to read there the meaning of the universe and the value of human life is the ideal of the church at its best. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth lies there. There faith lives in its highest form, ethical insight is there thorough and sovereign, humanity within that domain is true to the God who made it, and to the race of which it is the great expression. The man Christ Jesus is the mirror of the God who is, and the type and prophecy of the race that shall be. That all faith and all life should come to judgment here is inevitable; but this is not now the issue. That theology and conduct should be ultimately amenable to the mind of Christ is indisputable. The revolution that is under way in theology is due to the arraignment of the historic systems at the judgment seat of Christ. If they perish it is because of his sentence upon them; if they survive, it is owing to his approval. Nothing that contradicts his spirit can forever go forward in his name. The incompatibility between the mind of Christ and the mind of Augustine and Calvin and

Edwards explains the loss of empire that has befallen these great thinkers. They are facing him who is higher than the heavens; they tried to represent him; in much they succeeded, and in much they failed. A new utterance is demanded under the compulsion of the judgment of Christ. This is plain, but it is not now the point. The consciousness of Christ is the highest known to mankind; the soul of Jesus and its content Godward and manward is without a rival; his vision and his love are first, and beside him there is no other. I cannot conceive of a nobler calling or a worthier task than that which seeks to master something of the vision and love of Christ that it may make them the vision and the love of mankind. We have found the Christ! that was the shout of gladness that rang from Andrew to Peter, and from Philip to Nathanael. It was the supreme discovery in that age. It was the perpetual discovery of those young men, and their brethren on through trial and achievement to the end of existence. It was this increasing discovery that clothed them with power, and that turned them into epoch-making men. They had found the supreme human soul, and in that discovery they had a message for mankind. The world waits for the renewal of this discovery. Still the Messianic expectation lives in the conscious and

unconscious longing to look upon a great soul. Still the calling is supreme that finds the divine soul, and that carries something of its vision and love into the heart of the waiting world.

But how can we reach to-day the consciousness belonging to Jesus Christ? Where is his dwelling, and where are the windows through which we may look in upon the king in his beauty? Perhaps an example will be the best guide in answering this profound and difficult question. Paul said: "We have the mind of Christ." How did he reach his great possession? He doubtless knew, in a distorted way, from the outset of his career the story afterwards embodied in the Gospels. That of itself, however, did him no good. Upon this knowledge, and as the issue, doubtless, of serious questioning and much discipline there followed the new mood into which his conversion brought him. However we view the experience of Paul on his way to Damascus it was but the bare beginning of his Christian career. His account of that experience assures us that he saw Jesus, and that he received certain commands from him. But nothing is said that would lead one to believe that Jesus in this appearance to Paul recited to him the evangelical history, or that he gave to his new disciple a full and adequate interpretation of that history. His conversion

left Paul with the conviction that Jesus was alive, with certain definite directions from the unseen Lord, and with new sympathies and hopes. At this point he could not have said: "We have the mind of Christ."

Doubtless Paul obtained, in the natural way, a full and accurate account of the public ministry of Jesus. His repeated assertions that his gospel was not derived from the other apostles, but that it was received directly from the Lord, do not contradict this position. Paul's gospel does not consist in facts, but in the interpretation of facts. His insight into the career of Jesus was the original thing in Paul's ministry; his message, gathered out of the common possession of fact, was his great distinction. But to this full and accurate knowledge of Jesus obtained in a natural way Paul now brought new sympathies, fresh purposes, inspired insight. The evangelical story now became to Paul a marvelous symbol. By profound and eager meditation, by following Jesus in imagination from city to city, by as it were hearing him speak, by watching him in toil and in trial, among the twelve, with the multitude, healing the sick and lifting up the penitent and broken-hearted, before the chief priest and Pilate, on the cross between the two thieves, and on the morning of the resurrection as in his appearance to the

disciples on their walk to Emmaus, or to Paul himself on his way to Damascus, the apostle got before his mind the wonderful symbol, and he began to see behind it the mind of Christ. Distorted history, new sympathies, full and accurate history, this subjected to profound appreciation and through years of thought and of service; such were the steps, as it would appear, by which Paul passed into the vision of the mind of Christ. To this must be added, partly as the result of discipline in the service of Jesus, the sense of spiritual companionship with him. The unseen Jesus thus continued to reveal himself to his disciple, opened up his mind in greater fullness to this chosen servant, and lifted him to higher altitudes of vision and to completer assurance as his Master's interpreter. Paul never fails to distinguish between this sovereign objective intelligence and his own; he sees clearly that the Lord's mind and his are two, and that there is an immeasurable difference between them, and yet the apostle becomes more and more dominated by his ideal. He subjects himself to Christ so devoutly and completely, and through so many years and so much trial that it comes to pass that he does not live, it is Christ who lives in him and speaks through him.

This process is, in a way, repeated in the

experience of every Christian man. The evangelical history known in an imperfect manner, and understood not at all, perhaps misunderstood, — that is the first step. Then there come, through the serious discipline of life, the new sympathies, the definite moral purpose, and the clarified vision. The evangelical history is studied anew, with more attention, with profounder interest. Slowly the person of Jesus seems to come out of the mist, and to stand behind his words and works, and back of the whole series of events with which his name is associated. The Gospel is now a living symbol; and under it is the living Lord. Appreciation, working through study of the history, operating now by the full power of the highest critical scholarship, and again by the force of plain common sense, goes deeper and deeper into the soul of Jesus, sees its content more widely and clearly, looks upon it with stronger assurance, and becomes conscious of it as accessible and yet transcendent, as a possession and yet as the grand objective of all search, the unceasing inspiration of wisdom and the final home of all authority and peace. Here too when the disciple is devout the sense of spiritual communion with the Lord follows. Through the words of prophet and apostle, through the great words of Christ himself, the high dialogue goes on between the dis-

ciple and his unseen Master; and often through his own thoughts and feelings, in outgoings of his own soul and in returns upon him of the soul of the Lord, the grand process of illumination goes forward. Thus through history subjected to moral insight, and issuing in direct communion of soul with the soul of Jesus, the disciple is able to say: We have the mind of Christ. The history is the symbol; the knowledge of this history is the method, and here there is room for the transformation of popular study into scientific; but the power without which the mind of Christ can never be reached is moral sympathy, spiritual imagination, religious appreciation. Where the symbol and the method and the power exist there the vision of the soul of the Lord is found the supreme wonder, the sublimest possession.

V

A few words will suffice upon the person of Christ. Upon such a question the openness to misunderstanding is great; and the use of words is always uncertain. To me the Christological tradition of the church is unspeakably precious. The church is not founded upon theism, but upon Christian theism. The testimony of the creeds is impressive when one recalls the fact that the creeds are witnesses to what was vital

in the life of the church. Nothing can be so surely fatal to the pulpit as a meagre Christology. For the preacher of Christianity the person of its founder is central and sovereign. He kindles love where every other inspiration fails; he sustains enthusiasm where without him human nature would break down; he commands the homage of his people through their gratitude and their hope. Wherever the church has been living and mighty Jesus Christ has been felt to be absolutely indispensable to its faith, its love, and its power. He has thus identified himself with his message. His religion lives in his life among men. He stands in the historic experience of his disciples in a unique and in an inseparable association with God.

To me, thinking in profound sympathy with the highest Christological tradition of the church, Jesus seems to be the perfect man. His manhood, his perfect manhood, is the obvious truth of his existence. This obvious truth becomes the premise from which is elicited the divine meaning of his career. Jesus as the perfect man is fitted for unique moral union with that in God which the Fourth Gospel calls ὁ λόγος, which Paul designates ὁ χριστός, which the Epistle to the Hebrews names ὁ ὑιος, which the Nicene creed covers by the same word. It will be seen that a social conception of the nature of God is the logical

precedent for the true appreciation of the person of Jesus. Indeed a social conception of the being of God is the logical precedent to the just appreciation of mankind. As this general relation of humanity to Deity will emerge for consideration in the final chapter of this book, it need here detain us no longer. The point now calling for definite statement is the unique association of the life of Jesus with God inside that general association with God, in which a living humanity must stand. The Filial in God, Eternal in his being, wrought into our entire humanity, in consequence of which men are men, is in perfect union with Jesus. The Incarnation has its meaning in this unique identification of the soul of Jesus with the Eternal filial in God; and this unique identification is through the perfect manhood of Jesus. The conception of God's being for which the Trinity stands, as we shall see later, is the ground of humanity, and the ground of the unique meaning of the life of Jesus. He is the supreme historic utterance of the Eternal Son; he is in perfect moral union with that in God so named. Before his advent Jesus was not; but the Son of God whose perfect human expression he is, is eternal in the heavens. The preëxistence of Jesus I do not find in the teaching of the great theologians, with the exception of Origen, and he teaches the

preëxistence of all soul. It is not Jesus who preëxists before his advent; it is the Logos, the Christ, the eternal Son who preëxists. Preexistence concerns primarily the doctrine of God, and only in a secondary sense the person of Jesus. The position here maintained is that Jesus the perfect man is the sovereign historic expression of the eternal Son in the bosom of the Father, and that Jesus as perfect man is in an association with God ideal, unique, and unsearchable.

With the exception of the idea of preëxistence, this is essentially the position of Origen on the Incarnation. In the teaching of Origen the doctrine of God is first, logically first. In himself God is eternally the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Before all worlds God was thus an ineffable society in himself. Souls were then in existence in that pre-temporal world. According to the high use or the abuse of freedom they drew near to God, or fell away from him into time. Among the uncounted multitude of souls in that eternal world there was one preëminent and perfect soul. Between all souls and the Eternal Son there is kinship; between this preëminent and perfect soul there is ineffable union. This preëminent and perfect soul became, in the flesh, Jesus the ideal man, and as such Jesus became the sovereign organ in time of the Eternal Son in the Godhead.

If we ignore the idea of preëxistence in this scheme, it seems to me to cover with remarkable adequacy the thought of this generation concerning Jesus. The kinship between God and man is a fundamental position of faith to-day. It is a living and fruitful truth. In virtue of it we are able to discover in God an eternal humanity, and in human existence an infinite significance. It cannot be said too often or with too great emphasis that there is between God and every man an inseparable association; that there is in every man a genuine incarnation of God. But the obliteration of the possibility of distinction in the association between God and man is against the facts of religious history, and it is against the facts in the record of the life of Jesus. His soul is easily seen to be the sovereign soul, the soul of unique and unapproachable distinction. And this soul of unique distinction has assigned to it a unique vocation. That vocation is that Jesus serve as the supreme organ of the Eternal Son in God. The need of this vocation on the divine side, and on the human, the reality of this vocation in the life of Jesus, and the sovereign distinction of Jesus in the fulfillment of his vocation, are positions that belong together and that support one another. The ancient insights into the monumental meaning of the life of Jesus must not be allowed to

fade from our faith; they must be kept and adjusted to the modern insights into the divine worth of man as man; insights for which we are indebted to a new appreciation of Christianity in the light of the general progress of society. And having ventured to connect with my own sense of the meaning of the Incarnation the great name of Origen, I will add to this exposition his concluding words: "The above, meanwhile, are the thoughts which have occurred to us, when treating of subjects of such difficulty as the incarnation and deity of Christ. If there be any one, indeed, who can discover something better, and who can establish his assertions by clearer proofs from holy Scriptures, let his opinion be received in preference to mine."[1]

The point of chief moment is the moral aspect of the subject. We have in Jesus the highest expression of the wisdom and love of God, the final single utterance of that in the Infinite which chiefly concerns our race, — his goodness, his pity, his perfect moral being, and our complete involvement with that being. Jesus is thus the world's sovereign symbol for God, the world's sovereign assurance of God. As prophet, as priest, and as king, God is with him; for God he speaks, for God he suffers, for God he rules. And if humanity is ever to be filled with

[1] Origen, *De Principiis*, Book II. chap. vi.

the eternal harmonies, it will be because the song of good-will that brightened the heavens over the manger in Bethlehem is played by the power of Jesus Christ into all its thoughts and sympathies, into all its achievements and hopes.

CHAPTER VIII

THE UNIVERSAL ULTIMATE: THE MORAL UNIVERSE

I

THERE is a broad distinction to be noted between questions that are interesting, and in a way important, and those that are of fundamental moment. Questions of uniform, of commissariat, of arms, of infantry, and of cavalry, of this plan of campaign and that, are of grave importance; still they may be answered in any one of a considerable number of ways, without serious inconvenience. But the question of men and of a commander is fundamental. Without them the campaign cannot begin. Hannibal might have crossed the Alps into Italy by a different pass; his fifteen years of warfare in the enemy's country involved a constant election from an indefinite number of possible modes of advance and retreat; but that Hannibal himself should be in command, and that he should have an army to command, are ultimate necessities of the situation. The distinction between the secondary issues in theology and the primary is too

important to be safely disregarded. Indeed, it is of such importance to genuine theological perspective that a few words must now be given to the illustration of it.

The question of the sciences is confessedly one of great interest and utility. The exact study of facts and the valid interpretation of them over the whole domain of nature may well appear to be an indispensable vocation. There is nothing but honor for this calling among sensible men. But even here there is a previous question. Is nature real? Is science the study of a real world beyond man? Is the order impressed upon nature by the mind of the scientific student, or does nature put her order into a mind previously empty, or do nature and human intelligence meet as friends in the name of the law that is power without, and thought within? These are questions that precede scientific study. They are not the puzzles of an unsound mind. Science is often drunk with the vanity of her certainties. She has said strange things against faith; and it has been needful to remind her that the reality of the ultimate object of her devotion is as much assumed as anything to which faith is devoted. At any rate, science is not the first question; before that, comes the question of the reality of what we call the outward world. The study of that question has had not a little to do with

forcing scientific men to the conviction that in dealing with nature they are dealing with an expression of cosmic mind. There are two ways of building: we may build in dreams or we may build on reality. Is our scientific habitation a dream-structure or does it rest upon the real world? Until that question is answered science is but an Abraham with the knife, the wood, and the altar, the mere implements of research, full of the hideous mistake that his child is the victim for the sacrifice. Not until the Patriarch saw the ram in the thicket did he find the fundamental thing; and the reality of nature is to the scientific devotee the ram in the thicket. Be sure of the implements, take care that the wood and the altar are ready, and that the knife is sharp; but before all lay hold of the ram. Is nature real? That question is fundamental.

Man is the subject of immensely varied and fruitful discussion. And yet one hears serious voices proclaiming the fact that there is no such thing as human personality. To proceed with the discussion while there is serious doubt about the reality of the subject of it is surely vain. Anthropology assumes the reality of man. It is the prior question to all inquiry directed upon human life. As a separate chapter has been given to it, nothing need here be added other

than the bare statement that it is fundamental to all thought upon things human. Here is a case surely where one should not count one's chickens until they are hatched. Said a gentleman to his cook, What is the first requisite for hare soup? The answer was, First catch your hare. Before you dress man, and present him for the edification of your hearers, make sure that you have caught him.

An example of the chastening influence of a great primary question is found in the subject of human immortality. Look into the older books upon Eschatology, and how confident you find them about the details of heaven and hell, especially of hell. It is only the symbolic worth of Dante's "Inferno," its fitness to represent the judicial process in history, that saves it from the doom that has fallen upon all post-mortem dogmatism. It is deplorable to think that for perhaps eighteen hundred years the Christian imagination has run riot in its detailed and horrible representation of the state of wicked men after death. Prof. A. V. G. Allen has well said that the least original and characteristic part of Edwards's teaching is found in his sermon on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." In that deplorable discourse Edwards becomes the spokesman of a tradition going back to very early times. Such confident detailed represen-

tation had been an immemorial custom. I recall now a sentence from a sermon of Dr. Griffin from the text, "A man shall be as an hiding place," which runs thus: "But to his own dear people he will be a refuge from the waves that shall eternally lash the howling millions of the damned." How to stop this terrible Babel became the serious consideration of a generation of noble teachers. But their protest would have availed nothing if the good providence of God that evermore educates the world had not intervened in its behalf. A vast suspicion of the immortality of man was spread through the educated world. A new and yet more fundamental interest sobered the old. The terrible doubt arose whether both heaven and hell were not mere superfluities. The thought pressed itself home upon the dogmatist in Eschatology, You may not need these places. It may be that they are eternal vacancies. It may be that nothing can be done to people them from this earth. It may be that we are such stuff as dreams are made of, and that our little life is rounded with the sleep that knows no awakening.

One does not need to be very old in order that one may have witnessed this vast and wholesome silence fall upon the eschatological Babel. The shadow was moved backward from man's future

to man's nature. The shallow and heartless idiom became obsolete by simply asking a profounder question. The old, vague, and somewhat theatrical earnestness was converted into an anxiety indefinitely deeper. For the fate of the wicked after death there was substituted the fate of humanity. The theologian was thrown back upon himself, back upon his kind. Out of this change of interest from the secondary to the primary has come the new mood in which all questions of destiny are faced. It is a mood of more pronounced ethical rigor, yet this ethical rigor is suffused with unwonted tenderness, and lighted with the hope that is inseparable from goodness. Nowhere, perhaps, is the example of widespread wholesomeness arising from carrying the debate to its fundamental form so conspicuous as at this point, at least for the present generation. Before we build the judgment-seat in the future, we must first ascertain what likelihoods exist that we shall live to appear before it. Before dealing in detail with the judgment of God in eternity, we must decide whether or not there is any extra-mundane meaning to human life. Such are some of the questions that raise the great primary interests of faith along this line, and that generate the humanity and the insight and the candor that are the hope of theology.

It seems as if there were but one sure way to

recall the Christian church from intellectual pettiness. It appears as if that one way were to throw into doubt the eternal verities. The sick child on the verge of death hushes to silence the social ambitions and miserable disappointments of the fashionable home, and when faith itself is at stake men begin to desist from their pious trifling. It would seem as if God in his providential education of man were throwing his own being and character into doubt, in order that all theists may unite in a holy controversy against all atheists. Christians are driven back upon the question whether Jesus represents anything but himself, that the great line of division may be between Jesus as the assurance of the moral being of God and Jesus with nothing for background but the eternal silence. Human destiny is in doubt that human nature may be understood. Forms are thrown into infinite discredit that the true issue may be seen to be between truth and falsehood, righteousness and iniquity, humanity and inhumanity. The Roman centurion took Paul and locked him up to protect him from the mob. The Eternal Spirit would seem to be thus securing believers against the crowd of their fierce and foolish questions. What are questions of ritual, of ecclesiastical order, of episcopal succession, but the immeasurable pettinesses of the Christian church? How can this Babel be put to silence?

Only, it would seem, by the providential centurion, taking all the poor debaters about trifles and locking them up in the one awful controversy over the reality of the fundamental things of faith.

It is this constant catholic dealing with the fundamental and the essential that makes the teaching of Jesus the very bread of life. Read the book of Leviticus, or listen to the report of the rabbinical debates current in the time of Jesus, or attend some gathering of Pharisees and hear them speak, and then join the disciples of Jesus and hear their Master. His questions are questions of the moral being of God and the moral nature of man. The Fatherhood of God, the divine sonhood and the universal human brotherhood of man, the reign of Infinite love in the hearts of men as the ideal of faith and the goal of history, the claims of justice and kindness, the infinitely varied and supreme disclosure of the moral organism of humanity, and the tides of the Holy Spirit that keep it a living organism, time as an epoch in the endless existence of the soul in the presence of God, and eternal life — the life of sovereign love — as the grand characteristic of normal and happy existence in this world and in all worlds, — these teachings of Jesus recall the sphere in which he moved. The petty interests then as now were

infinite; the important but secondary interests were imperious in that day as in this; but Jesus chose the eternal as his passion; he lifted all who heard him into the sense of it, and he redeemed the vocation of the teacher from barrenness into the discipline that enlightens and feeds the rational nature of man.

The Sermon on the Mount is the supreme criticism upon a superficial and errant civilization; it carries one into the consciousness of the profoundest needs of the soul, and it matches these with the sublimest assurances of God's love. In its resolution of the law into the life and obligation of the spirit it again carries one into an infinite interest. In its discussion of the meaning of righteousness, fasting, almsgiving, prayer, sincerity, it takes the race into the presence of the eternal realities of the moral universe. The teaching of Jesus and the spirit of Jesus are a divine discipline in the fundamental, the essential, the everlasting. The heart of all faith and all life forever beats in the teaching of Jesus, and therefore the heart of man in all ages opens to him. He is the abiding teacher because he teaches with unapproachable depth and nobleness abiding truth. The authority of the Gospel is due to its insight and to its range of subjects. The divine vision and the divine world unite in the Gospel, and it is this union

that gives it sovereignty over human interest. In a generation flooded with incidental questions, compelled to spend much of its strength on subjects of secondary concern, kept back for good reasons and also for bad reasons from the vision of the essential, nothing is more needed than discipline in the teaching of Jesus. What he chose to omit and to disregard is second in importance only to what he elected as the substance of his message. He scorned no human interest; ignorance of any kind finds no sanction in the spirit of Jesus; growth in all genuine ways is provided in the impulse which he communicates to his disciples; and yet the perspective of Jesus is the thing that this generation needs above all else to control the work of its intelligence.

This brings up for consideration the historical and literary questions about the Bible. They certainly are important. If one could have a thoroughly scientific view of this collection of books, and thus be sure which are parts and which are wholes; and if one could further assign to the proper person, place, and time these several compositions, surrounding each with its own environment, putting behind it its real author, and before it its definite and immediate object, one would be immensely enriched as a student and teacher of the Bible. The local meaning is the color in the east, the gateway of

morning through which the glory of the universal significance comes. Universals are best seen through particulars, things eternal through things temporal. The motive, therefore, to historical and literary scholarship is urgent and permanent. The value of Shakespere's work is in a way independent of his personal history, but his great creations would mean more to us if we could see them rising out of the times, circumstances, and fortunes of his own soul. The industry expended in research into the facts in the career of a Luther, a Cromwell, a Burns, or a Lincoln, is an attestation to the truth of the assumption that the knowledge of the man is the best introduction to the knowledge of his message. There is nothing divine in ignorance. The fact that any Christian century is dim is not a credit to the believer. We have a right to expect that historical inquiry will yet do greater things for the church, that it will make more vivid and palpable the environment of Jesus, that it will present the transcendent figure of the Master more and more in the rich detail and complexion of nature, custom, belief, tradition, and need amid which he lived. In him the Eternal came through the temporal. He is, therefore, the highest vindication of the scientific spirit, the spirit that would reach ideas through facts, that regards the actual historic framework

as alive with meaning, that seeks the universal in the particular. Events are great. The web of events woven by living men, the warp and woof of which are their sorrow and hope, their defeat and victory, is too important to be neglected. The rich detail of the great epochs of the world, like the Biblical epoch, are nothing less than windows through which we may look upon the order, movement, and splendor of the spiritual universe. Longfellow puts this transcendent value of the particular with his usual felicity. The Village Blacksmith hears his daughter singing in the village choir; that is the single event, and here is the transcendent meaning it has for him, —

> "It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
> Singing in Paradise."

Biblical learning may be said to be the rediscovery of the fact in time, place, circumstance, composition, person, utterance, object; and the fact is the window whereby we may look out upon the idea in the peculiar light and shadow of a special environment.

All this is true, and still it must be said that these historical and literary inquiries are not fundamental. Suppose that one has been able to rearrange the Old Testament in exact accord with the veritable history, one has yet to face this problem, What is the worth of the Old

Testament? To what is it a witness? Does it testify to anything but to Israel? Has it any value as a message for man? Is it in any sense a word from the Eternal? Is it revelation? That is the fundamental question to which the higher critics have paid no attention. Is there a living God of whom Jehovah is but an imperfect conception? Does he speak to men? Is there any monumental record of the grand dialogue which elect spirits have held with him? In the presence of these questions those that have absolutely dominated the Biblical scholar for a generation become trivial. Believers do not fear the higher criticism; they fear the scholar who asks no deeper question, and who has no answer to the demand for ultimate reality. If the rebellion is crushed, few will be disturbed over the sifting of the documents in which Grant and Lee recorded the event. If there is a speaking God in the universe, believers in him will not be anxious under all honest examination and cross-examination of even the supreme historic witness to the fact. If God is the "I am," God as the "I was" may be freely considered without injury to faith. The critic with no faith, and the critic with no sense of the fundamental questions of faith are the menace of the time. Mary the worshiper of the dead Christ is appalled at the empty sepulchre.

"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Mary the disciple of the risen Christ turns away from the empty grave in perfect peace. The sorrow is that she should have ever identified the grave and her Master. The more the critic says about the dead portions of the Old Testament, while saying nothing about the living God, the more desperately does the devout believer cling to them; but when the critic is at the same time the prophet of the living God, the shame of the believer then is that he should have ever supposed that these Hebrew superstitions and inhumanities, these Hebrew tombs, could have contained him. The superficial inquiry when it obscures the fundamental issue is simply intolerable. Stimulation will make the limbs of a dead man perform wonderful feats of contraction and repulsion, but are not these performances ghastly when one thinks of the dead heart and the vacant brain? Historical criticism upon a dead revelation is like that. We want to know whether the man is alive whose hands are moving; we desire to know whether there is life and worth underneath historical learning. We go to fundamental questions for relief. And one of these questions is the question of this moral universe.

II

About the reality of a moral world there is no doubt. Human society is such a world. It has its basis in man's nature, it is an attempt at the realization of moral ideals. The ends of justice, the sacredness of truth between man and man, and the sense of the worth and awful sanctity of human life are inseparable from the social consciousness. The life of man is in society. Society appears in the form of the family, the business fellowship, the communities of art and science, in the great relation of citizenship, and in those ideas and feelings that assert the reality of human brotherhood. Human life thus organized by moral reason both in its instinctive and reflective operations is forever shadowed by the vision of a better than its best. It is in duty bound to become that better social whole. Human relationship is the primal moral fact. Relationships yield ideals, ideals impose obligations, obligations in the long run enforce obedience, and moral obedience is the great affirmation of the reality of the moral order. The negative witness to the same reality is disobedience and its issue of pain and disaster.

The moral world of man is the ground of the discrimination which he makes between himself and nature. He does not expect from nature

what he expects from his fellowman. The torrid heat, the polar cold, the storm, the earthquake, and the fire have no mercy upon man. He does not look for this high attribute in nature. When one of Sir Walter Scott's characters beats the boat out of which his boy Steenie had been lost, swears at it, and blames it for the deplored event, we all see, as the fine old Antiquary saw, that the poor father is crazed with grief. In his senses no one blames the sea for sending the ship upon the rocks, or the rocks for wrecking it, or the fire for the destruction of property, or wind and tide for the desolation of cities. No one holds the volcano amenable to the moral ideal of man. But the Italian and Spaniard in the Inquisition, the Frenchman on the night of St. Bartholomew, the riot of the Turk and the Chinaman, are held in utter detestation. They violate humanity, they commit outrage upon man and his moral world. In the tenderest of all English ballads, we do not blame nature for starving the children ; but we load with execration the inhuman wretch who left them to starve.

Upon the basis of his moral world man distinguishes between himself and the animal. He is quite ready to admit the struggle for the life of others by which the animal struggle for existence is qualified. Still this precious anticipation of high social feeling does not carry one

far. No man expects the mother reptile or lion, or tiger, in its struggle for the life of others, to spare him. He does not look for sympathy to that strenuous section of existence. He may have a quick eye for the rudimentary altruism in the wild beast, but he is not so foolish as to think that his existence or happiness is any concern to it. The concern of the lion for the lamb is proverbial, and it is a standing illustration of man's suspicion of the courtesies of the wild beast. He must protect himself against it. He cannot demand of it any consideration. It is not in his world. It is not amenable to his standards; it is not the subject of his judgments, it cares nothing for his ideals, and in separating himself from the beast man asserts his great and ineffaceable distinction. Even the tame animal whose nature breaks loose and works damage upon its owner and friend, like the dog that in a fit of ill-temper attacks its master, or the horse that knocks him down, is not held accountable. In the same way the fool and the madman are no part of man's world. They are irresponsible. The life that is held to be unanswerable to moral judgment at once falls out of the human sphere. Amenableness to moral judgment is the essential mark of manhood; without it there is no manhood. Amenableness to the moral ideal of society is

the seraphim with the flaming sword that guard the entrance into the human paradise.

Upon the basis of his moral world man discriminates between the actual and the ideal man, between what he is and what he ought to be. The apostle speaks for the race when he describes the dualism in his life, the carnal mind and the spiritual. The true selfhood is set over against the false, in every morally awakened person, as sharply as it is contrasted with nature or the brute life of the world. Idealism is inseparable from the normal human being. To the normal man the ideal self is the true self. "To thine own self be true." Here is the discrimination between the authentic man and the spurious. "I count not myself to have apprehended." Here is the judgment rendered against the actual self and in favor of the ideal. Where there is little or no conscious schism in life, the actual is but the seed out of which the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear are to come. At best the actual is but the plan of the self in the initial steps of the great process of fulfillment. It is the acorn with the pattern of the oak lying at its heart, beginning to take hold of the soil, and looking forward to the vast struggle through which the pattern is to be turned into life. What is true of the individual man is true of social man. One permanent

element in society is the clear recognition of the difference between the form which it wears and that which it should wear. Man's moral world declares itself through an idealism which overhangs the entire range of his interests. From the position of this ideal selfhood man judges the actual in himself, the animal beside him, and the natural order beyond him. He feels about the ideal as the Indian did when found in the forest: "Indian no lost; wigwam lost." The centre of assurance is the ideal, the position from which to discover what is lost is the ideal.

Law is but an expression of this peculiarity of man's world. It is the embodiment in the form of a statute of a judgment to which all citizens are answerable. Law is the confession of a social ideal and the enforcement of it. The ideal may be low or high, in either case it is real. All government originates in conscience; all good government has its primal support in conscience. The moral judgment in man is the faculty of vision for the better order and the higher well-being of society; and law is the continuous enactment in less imperfect forms of the continuously improving vision of the moral judgment. As the pattern in the mount was to the tabernacle in the wilderness, so is law to the moral judgment of the nation. The tabernacle is immeasurably below the pattern, yet it is

fashioned after it, and bears some resemblance to it. Law is unmeasured distances behind the best moral judgment of the time; nevertheless it is in pursuit of it. It is framed upon that moral judgment as its model, and with all its failures there are at least traces of the ideal in it.

Moral criticism is another expression of man's moral world. Every honest man encamps at the foot of Sinai; and if he has advanced to Mount Zion, it is to a moral judge infinitely more severe. Every honest man lives under the shadow of his own rebuke. Our hearts condemn us because we live in a moral world that is purer than we. The passing of judgment upon our fellowmen is inevitable. It is impossible to look with the same feeling upon Moses and Pharaoh, Samuel and Saul, Ahab and Josiah, Paul and Pilate, Marcus Aurelius and Nero, Luther and Leo X., Washington and Benedict Arnold. The moral contrast that one finds between Jesus and Judas is a contrast which in less emphatic form, often indeed greatly toned down, is wrought into the history of mankind. The sentence passed upon others may be just or unjust; in either case it attests the presence of the moral judge in man. In a similar way institutions are regarded. The governments of the world are arraigned before the moral sense of mankind on two counts. They

are arraigned on the question of the adequacy of their constitution; they are brought into court to answer for the administration of that constitution. The church stands in the same great process of judgment. Is its form the best practicable institutional embodiment of the Gospel? Is its administration in accord with its Christian ideal? The moral world of man is nowhere more evident than in the vigilant eye that the community keeps upon the church and its ministers. They must be clean who bear the vessels of the Lord.

The application of conscience to the behavior of the universe is the last and highest expression of man's moral world. Moral criticism of the universe is indeed part of the supreme consolation. It may amount to a terrible indictment; yet the shadow which it throws upon the face of nature is cast by the light in man. One cannot be thankful enough to thinkers like Lucretius, Lucian, Hume, Schopenhauer, Mill, and Huxley for the immense assertion of the moral world of man which they inevitably make in their fierce criticism of the cosmos. When a great succession of thinkers regard the operation of nature as immoral, when they curse the universe for its inhumanity, they are giving one of the strongest testimonies to the moral world of man, and they are inaugurating a vast return to that

faith in the universe which they have set themselves to abolish; for the greater that we make man, even when this greatness is at the expense of the universe, the deeper do we lay the foundations of faith. The man who finds something divine in himself and in his kind sooner or later will be sure to discover the source of it in God. This criticism of the cosmos becomes a censure upon theology for seeking the moral God where he cannot be found. It inaugurates the return of man to himself, the search for God through his best work; it leads back to the religion of the Incarnation, to the faith in God that is founded upon the Divine man.

The reality of the moral world may thus be taken for granted. The human race lives in this world. But is there such a thing as a moral universe? Human society is a fact in the many-sided history of this planet. It is enfolded in an immeasurable cosmical order. Is it an alien in the heart of immensity? Is it an island and the only one in the universe? Is there no conscience anywhere except in man's spirit, no love except in man's heart, no moral reason and no law of righteousness beyond human society? Is the moral world merely human, a phase of the highest development of life upon the earth, the brilliant explosion of the rocket that has run its swift course, something real but local,

true but without universal significance? Is the moral order a stranger in a strange land and that forever? or, like the first Hebrew in Canaan, is the universe prophetically its possession? Through the terrestial fact of man's moral world are there indubitable intimations of the reality of a moral universe?

III

From the fact of correspondence between organism and environment, it would seem to follow that there is something in the universe that answers to the moral life of man. The sea, the earth, and the air constitute different environments for different forms of life, and the fish, the quadruped, and the bird attest the reality of these environments. Organism and environment are as essential each to the other as upper and nether millstone; and the existence of the organism and its growth is proof of the reality and hospitality of its environment. Life is its own witness; it is besides a witness to the sympathy of the cosmos. The fossil is proof that nature once had room for animal life; the actual living creature is the attestation that she is still kind. The successive generations of the organisms that survive declare while they survive that sustenance and shelter exist for them in nature. Up from the life of the sea, over the broad earth,

from domestic animal and wild, from gentle and fierce, and from the sky and its singing inhabitants comes the one great assertion that the real world and the real organism belong together.

Waiving for the moment the Christian claim that the pure in heart see God, that the moral universe is given in moral experience, that the reality of the soul's environment is not a matter of inference but of insight, it may be urged that a moral organism without a moral opportunity would be contrary to the analogy of life. From the fact that everywhere else organism and opportunity go together, one is led to expect a similar correspondence between the moral organism of society and the moral environment. And as life is always the witness of the reality both of the organism and its opportunity, so again the persistence and improvement of moral life is proof of the organism and its answering environment. It would be strange if there should be waterbrooks corresponding to the need of the hart that pants after them, and no living God or divine universe answering to the thirst of the soul. And further, if the refreshed hart is a good witness for the reality of the waterbrooks, it is difficult to see why the abounding soul is not an equally good witness of the reality of the streams that make glad the city of God. In an interesting essay upon "The Everlasting Reality

of Religion,"[1] John Fiske has restated in modern terms the ancient argument for the existence of God from analogy. His fundamental position is that organism and environment match each other throughout the domain of physical life; and from this position it is claimed, upon the strength of analogy, that it is reasonable to assume the reality of the Divine being who answers to the organism of the human soul. This argument should be pressed to a yet stronger conclusion. Life should be called in as a witness for that without which it could not be. As in the physical domain it is the persisting life that is the last and best testimony to the correspondence between organism and opportunity, so in the spiritual sphere it is life that is the supreme witness. The big, fat, glossy tiger in the jungle is a living witness to the correspondence between organism and environment, and the soul of the saint is a similar witness to the correspondence between the moral organism and the moral environment. That moral life in the persons that constitute society should persist is the final attestation to the sympathetic reality of the moral environment.

This then is the fundamental position. Life is the sure witness for the reality of that without which it could not exist. This self-evident con-

[1] *Through Nature to God*, pp. 132–194.

viction may be reduced to the form of analogy. Upon the justifiable assumption that as it is with life in the physical kingdom so it is with life in the kingdom of the spirit, we may advance to a somewhat closer consideration of the signs of the reality of the moral universe. The belief in its reality is of immemorial antiquity. The saying that "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" is one expression of the belief. The remark embodies the faith that the cosmos favors the moral cause. Another expression of the conviction is the prophetic cry, "My sword hath been bathed in heaven." Here the idea is that the conflict between truth and falsehood, righteousness and iniquity, is a universal conflict. A third form of the same feeling is the vision of Jacob and the realization of this vision in Jesus Christ.[1] In the vision of the first Israelite the ladder reached from earth to heaven, and ministering beings under an august commission went and came between the human dreamer and the Infinite life. In the consciousness of Jesus the heavens were open. The intercommunion of the human and the divine became fact. The sympathetic reality of the moral universe was given in the moral life of the Supreme Man.

Taking these three forms of the belief as con-

[1] Judges v. 20; Isaiah xxxiv. 5; Genesis xxviii. 12; John i. 51.

venient guides in the examination of it, the first question is, Does the material world upon the whole favor man's moral world? Do the moral races become the ascendant races? Do the stars in their courses fight against the moral cause; or are they completely neutral; or are they upon the whole a sublime ally? The answer of evolutionary science is that the cosmos is on the side of human morality. In the struggle for existence morality has been for human society a help and not a hindrance. In the long run morality tells in favor of survival; it tells for the survival of the individual, the family, and the nation. Morality gives greater endurance; it promotes the development of intelligence; it leads to larger, compacter, and more fruitful social combinations. In the passage of empire from Egypt to Assyria, from Assyria to Babylon, from Persia to Greece, from Greece to Rome, from Rome debauched to the peoples out of whom modern Europe has come, from France to Great Britain, and from Spain to the United States, there has been upon the whole a moral gain to mankind. To the extent that the moral races become the dominant races, it may be said that righteousness has the cosmos on its side. It should be added that all the facts that attest the reality of human progress likewise attest the moral sympathy of man's environment. Against

the will of that environment progress could not live. Upon the supposition of cosmic indifference morality and immorality would have an equal chance; which is not the case. The fact, therefore, of the moral progress of mankind is evidence of the prevailing sympathy with the moral aim, not indeed of every aspect of the environment, but of the environment as a whole.

The second form of the belief in the reality of the moral universe, the sword that has been bathed in heaven, leads to another question. In what sense is it true that man's moral battle is the battle of the universe? In the sense at least that nature allows the moral cause to gain through the historic process. Nature is both friendly and unfriendly to man. Her friendliness is the basis of life; her unfriendliness is one of the impulses that lead to civilization.[1] Both her sympathy and her antipathy do more and better for the wise than for the foolish. The parable of the two builders with which the Sermon on the Mount closes is an illustration. Nature in her true character enters into the mind of the wise builder; while but a single aspect of her order reaches the understanding of the foolish builder. But the cosmos is not the total of man's environment. It is essential that one should ask for the origin of man's

[1] *The New Epoch for Faith*, chap. iii. pp. 102–124.

moral outfit and inspiration. Thomas Huxley has been widely praised and blamed for his famous Romanes lecture in which he described man and nature as at war one with the other. The praise is deserved, because man is other and higher than nature. He finds his programme not in the procedure of nature, but in his own soul. He is under obligation to stand upon his humanity and for the preservation of his humanity to defy the brutality of nature. There is no procedure more insane than the attempt to reconcile man's world with the worlds beneath him. If man is a mere prolongation of nature, the simple pulling out of another part of the cosmic telescope, then it follows that man's humanity, the more completely it is developed, is nothing but ornamentation, perhaps excrescence.

In setting man and the cosmos in essential antagonism Huxley has done well. But he is clearly open to blame in asserting the absolute antagonism of nature and human ethics. As nature is the older and the stronger, ethics could not live long enough to define the issue were nature wholly hostile. Nature is not the source of the ethical ideal, but it is clear as day that to some extent she is friendly to it. And even her unfriendliness, when taken in connection with the total human environment of which nature is a part, may be an essential blessing.

The unfriendliness may be but the resisting air to the bird, to borrow Kant's illustration. That Huxley is still more absurdly in error in putting human society and its total environment at war, is obvious the moment one fixes attention upon the moral outfit of man. That moral outfit is not self-originated. If it is largely matter of inheritance it is still essentially a superhuman bequest. It is, therefore, false for the strong moral character to cry that the universe is against it. To the extent that one's ideal is realizable, one must feel that the universe is sympathetic. The will that holds out against evil, the love that shapes the home to a new soul of worth, the moral strength that is not permanently defeated, that easily and inevitably tends toward recovery even when the particular battle has gone against it, and that upon the whole surely advances upon its ideal ends, should not find it difficult to believe in the reality of the moral universe. The moral world of man in its ideals, endeavors, and achievements; in its recovery from defeat and disaster; in its gain upon its adversary, slow as a glacier's movement, but like it resistless, is a continuous and unequivocal witness to the truth of the moral character of his environment. If man and the cosmos are in conflict, as, under certain limitations, they surely are, man must owe to some

source his militant outfit, and the pluck and success with which he fights his battle. In the universe somewhere he must have a maker and backer. If the cosmos is representative, man is likewise representative. If it is impossible to unify them in one original character, it is at least desirable to see that the source of humanity is as much a part of the universe as the source of the cosmos. Unless he is self-created the energy and wisdom with which man defies his great adversary and gains his ethical ends argue somewhere a superhuman friendship. The fact is that the moral hero is the expression and servant of the moral universe. Cosmical hostility to man is but a single aspect of reality; and it would appear to be the gymnasium in which the universal moral order trains its hero. The strong will is the assurance of superhuman endowment and support, and the genuine fighter for righteousness always wields a sword that has been bathed in heaven.

The third form of the belief in the reality of the moral universe is associated with Christ. The perfect man is the complete assurance of the equal perfection of his source in the unseen. The life of Jesus taken as a simple fact yields this conclusion. His moral outfit must be accounted for; his ethical equipment has its parentage in the invisible. His original moral

capacities and sensibilities, the ideal that through the activity of his nature spontaneously shapes itself, the will that is equal to its ethical duty and that turns vision to fact, dream to reality, idea to truth at every stroke are a witness for the universe of the most impressive order. The section of the universe that opposes Jesus must be taken in connection with the section that produced him. If the dualism of the earth must be carried into the heavens, still upon this ground a universe partly ethical is better than a universe wholly hostile to supreme ethical ends, and this qualified sympathy with righteousness is at least true of the universal order. The advent of the man Jesus Christ is the attestation of this conclusion.

It must be observed that this supreme man lives out of the unseen. He of all men moves most among worlds unrealized. He renews his intelligence, refreshes his heart, reinvigorates his will through communion with an ideal world. In his kingdom, which is not of this world, he finds the truth and the power of his character. That the order which thus renews the exhausted servant of righteousness, supplies him with meat and drink, and becomes the source of his aims and his powers is unreal, is simply past belief. The universe that produces Jesus Christ and that supports him thereby reveals its own

Christly character. The advent of such a life opens an avenue back into the moral life of the universe; the persistence of such a soul is proof of the friendship between it and the heart of things. The moral world of Jesus Christ is proof of the reality of the moral universe.

The cause of Jesus must come into the account. At first it commends itself to the mass of his countrymen; it then encounters the opposition of the ruling classes; later its fate seems to be sealed in the death of its great originator and advocate. But the defeat is only temporary. The scattered disciples return, and with an invincible courage begin to carry out the programme of their crucified Master. The cause goes forward with immense power; and the story of the outrage and infamy to which Jesus had been subjected becomes one of the mightiest of the forces that rally men under his banner. The destructive force has become conservative, the engine of death an instrument for multiplying the life of Christianity. This conversion of enemies to friends, of ill fortune to good fortune, of the cross to the crown, is a witness to the power of the Gospel and to the sympathy of the universe. The history of Christianity is the history of the moral conquest of man, and it has been made by men to whom the unseen was but another name for Infinite friendship. Thus

the dream of the solitary Israelite comes true. It was of a ladder that rested upon the earth and against heaven, that united the visible and the invisible, that constituted a highway between the moral world of man and the moral universe. The Israelite did not know that his own soul in its moral outfit and experience was that ladder. The presence of the Divine was felt, but it was not understood. And the same remark applies to men to-day. There is still the dream of a real connection between the moral order here and the universal order. There is often a mystic consciousness of the Divine indwelling; but there is little appreciation that man himself stands with his feet on the earth and his head in heaven. The source of his moral endowment, ideal, aspiration, and experience is in the eternal. Out of the eternal he comes, and from its fullness he renews his moral being. And yet he is tempted to conclude that in origin, meaning, and destiny his being is wholly terrestrial. He must therefore take himself at his best. Christ is man at his best, and in his moral endowment, ideal, experience, cause and its fortune, the heavens are open. In his moral world the moral universe lives and works and attests its supreme and transcendent reality.

The question of the moral order of the universe is indeed vexed with mystery. Like the

earth while the flood lasted, the moral structure of the universe is covered by the inhumanity of man to man, and by the stern severity of man's natural environment. But even while the flood lay upon the earth Ararat appeared, and there the wandering ark rested. Then, too, the flood did not last forever. The waters began to abate; they continued to abate; finally the dry land everywhere appeared, and again the ancient and everlasting order of the world stood forth. Even in the worst conditions of human society there have been discernible here and there a soaring witness to the moral structure of the universe. The tops of the mountains cannot long remain submerged; through the aspirations of human souls the deepest becomes the highest. And moral evil is not here to stay. History is the record of the great abating process in the mystery of iniquity. It is man's privilege to accelerate this decrease, and to receive for his recompense the vision of a brighter future for his kind in the earth. Some day the flood will be gone, and men will build an altar to the Most High in the unveiled and glorious presence of the moral universe. Then will be verified the sublime insight of Jesus, which to-day is our comforting and yet audacious faith, that the universe is our Father's house.

CHAPTER IX

THE ABSOLUTE ULTIMATE: GOD

I

THERE is in one of the books of the Old Testament a familiar and noble parable which may fittingly introduce the supreme conception to which we have now come. The command is issued to the prophet, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?" The superficial contrasts in this scene between the tumultuous and the silent powers of the

[1] 1 Kings xix. 11–13.

world have been often noted. We do not get at the heart of the parable when we sink deeper and set over against each other the stormy movements that have no divinity in them and the peaceful but prevailing ways of the conscientious life. The fundamental contrast in the story is between the inhumanity and the humanity of it, between the noise that is mere sound, and the sound that is a voice. Meanings, beautiful meanings, ethical meanings, meanings that have in them the power of self-realization and that are centred in the life of an Infinite Person, — these are the great notes in man's consciousness of God. Nature is without divinity while she remains mere sound and fury. Not until she becomes law does she witness to anything beyond her wilderness of facts. Not until man becomes a conscious ethical order does he testify of the Divine. The voice, significant, lovely, awful, mighty, personal, is the symbol for the universe filled with the being of God.

If then we are compelled to say what we think God is, while with Simonides we may beg for more and more time that our answer may not be altogether foolish, we can at least outline a reply. We can call upon the intelligence, the æsthetic sense, the moral instinct, and the will for their report. For the intellect, God is the final meaning of the universe. As there can be no arch

without a keystone, so there can be no final intelligibleness to the universe without God. He is for reason the last and highest necessity. Without him we cannot, upon any subject, think ourselves into permanent light and peace. And as the circle is more than the sum of its parts, as it is the meaning of this sum, so God is more than the total of the universe, he is the meaning of this grand total. For the æsthetic sense, God is the significant beauty of the universe. Beauty is the spirit that lives in the artistic whole, whether it be a picture or a poem, a statue or a building or a symphony, whether it be nature or human character. The beauty of the universe is its significant loveliness, and for the artistic sense its significant loveliness is God. Thus it is that all high art is an appreciation of God, and the sincere and inspired apostles of beauty are prophets of the Most High. For conscience, God is the final moral meaning of the universe. The distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, has its last explanation in his nature. The defeat of evil and the triumph of goodness are hopes that live because he lives. The ethical ideal that guides the historic process of human development is but the image of his purpose. He is moral fruition for the eonian promise of man's great and pathetic struggle. He is the moral whole in which all the broken lives, all the

shattered characters, are to be refitted. God is the ideal life of the universe, and as such the ineffable pledge of ideal life to the race that is made in his image. For the will, God is the doer of righteousness, the bringer to event and fact of the ideal, the personal grace that transforms the soul and that works in the race its renewal in righteousness. Finally, for man, God is the person in whom the ideal meanings of life and the universe are gathered and authenticated, from whom comes the moral assurance without which individuals and races could not continue in the strenuous path of achievement, to whom men look as aboriginal inspiration, unerring leader, and perfect goal to the ethical endeavor of the world.

Our God, then, is the Person whose life is an infinite content of meanings. These meanings are in man and man's world; and he lifts them into an Eternal Person as their logical issue and assurance. This is the absolute ultimate among the conceptions of faith. The conceptions of human personality, humanity as a social whole, optimism as the truth of history, Jesus Christ as the supreme religious teacher, the universe as moral in its last intention, terminate here. They are roofed in by this final conception; they are taken up into the Infinite and made parts in an Ineffable whole.

Toward this great conception what shall be our attitude? Shall it be simply the highest tradition of humanity, the supreme thought of mankind? or shall we affirm, in one degree or another, its validity? Here is the final question of faith. Is the world's best conception nothing but a conception, or is it a verifiable, and therefore a real conception? The answer is sure to vary, according to the type of individual experience, from the extreme of agnostic hesitation to the rapt certainty of the pure in heart. Bacon thinks that no opinion about God is better than an unworthy opinion. In his classification superstition ranks below atheism. Atheism is simply unbelief, while superstition is the reproach of the Deity. A parallel to this mood is found in Carlyle's remark that it is better to be unremembered than to be misremembered. And there is doubtless some reason both for Bacon's thought and Carlyle's. Still unbelief is barren, while superstition implies at least a beginning in faith. Unworthy opinions of God would be a calamity if they were fixed; but they are subject to enlightenment and complete transformation. Unbelief, therefore, is to be counted out, in dealing with the supreme conception of faith, as unproductive, as falling below the task of verification. Superstition is to be counted in, as being a genuine, although a crude attempt at verifying the idea of God.

Beyond this is the mood of the reasoner in the school of probability whose position is illustrated by the prayer of the soldier going into battle: "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." Here the supreme meaning of the universe and of human life is in extreme uncertainty. God and the soul are to this mood an infinitely vital, but an extremely uncertain hypothesis. The honesty and the vitality of the mood are its prophetic notes. In contrast with this is the prayer of another soldier: "O God, if in the day of battle I forget thee, forget not thou me." The ultimate meaning of the universe is here assured; and in that assurance the uncertain life of man is covered and secured. This glimpse at the variety of moods in which men face the conception of God lends intensity to the question which we now ask, In what ways may the idea of God be seen to be real, and further, how may one gain some insight into the nature of that reality? Where is the path to the assurance that God lives, and where is the mount of vision from which we may see a little way into how he lives? We now face the question of the existence of God and of the mode of that existence.

II

Every true idea may be looked at in two ways. It may be regarded as a revelation or as a discovery, something presented to the human mind or an achievement by it, the product of the Divine appeal or the outcome of man's answer to that appeal. It may be said that light reveals itself to man or that man discovers it, that vision is the effect of the solar stimulus or the consequence of response to it. Either statement is true; both together make the complete truth. For the theist every valid conception is, from the Divine side, revelation, and from the human, discovery. For the consistent believer in God all genuine knowledge is an apocalypse, and all real apocalypse is knowledge. The mental product called knowledge always implies two things: the foreign stimulus and the native response. The universe acts upon the mind and the mind reacts upon the universe, and the product is knowledge. The highest action of the universe upon the mind is the appeal of God; the highest reaction of the mind upon the universe is man's answer to God's appeal. Here the product is valid, it is according to the real, and it may be properly regarded either as the gift of God or the achievement of man. It is both. Until this position is gained it is impossible to get any

large insight into the way in which the race has come into the possession of its highest wisdom. When revelation is wholly non-human, and knowledge is completely non-Divine the moral and spiritual progress of man becomes a hopeless puzzle. Nothing can bridge the chasm between the bloodless revelation and the godless knowledge but the mechanism of miracle. And when miracle is thus abused its real value is sure to be swiftly discredited. The fundamental position of faith is that God and man are implicated each in the other's life, as Jacob and the angel were implicated. They are interlocked in a tremendous midnight wrestle. Everything that God bestows man wins, and everything that man wins God bestows. It is true that the angel came to the Israelite; the priority, therefore, belonged to him. It was the pressure of his mighty arms that awoke the strength and that sustained the struggle of the human wrestler. Still if the blessing was a gift it was also an achievement; if the new name was a revelation it was likewise a discovery; if the Divine presence disclosed his character, as midnight wore on to daybreak, the exultant human antagonist felt that he saw God face to face. The story is a parable of the higher and properly human life of the race. We love God because he first loved us. The priority belongs to God. Man's

activity is the answer to God's appeal. And yet the daily bread for which men pray comes as the return to toil, and the word of God is imparted to the soul whose hunger has become great through struggle. The full and final truth would seem to be that God's best gifts come through man's achievements, and man's best achievements are God's gifts.

The Christian idea of God is a revelation; it is likewise a discovery, and it is the human side that comes up for emphasis in this discussion. The Christian idea of God is man's supreme achievement. It is the intellectual and spiritual summit of the race. The discipline among the Hebrews and Greeks that prepared the way for Christ's conception of God is among the greatest things in human history; and the struggle through which men are led to the ever larger appreciation of Christ's thought is of inexpressible moment. The race comes to its best in Jesus Christ; in him the eonian struggle rises into monumental achievement. One can dream of nothing higher, and the task of the individual now is to repeat in his own soul more and more of Christ's ineffable vision of God. The child repeating in broken accents and amid dim apprehensions at its mother's knee the Lord's Prayer, and the saint uttering life's last aspiration in the same great words represent the sublimest thing

in the soul, the endeavor of the individual man to renew the vision of God to which the race has risen in the Divine man.

If the idea of God is the supreme achievement of man, it is also his supreme comfort. Without God life is too much for the genuine man. It is infinite and it cries out for the support of the Infinite. The soldier in the line of fire cannot always comprehend the purpose of the fight; the passenger on the ship cannot always see the highway in the trackless sea; and in the same way comprehension and control of the world is for the wisest out of the question. It is the supreme solace to be able to confess God, to allow him to plan and command, to serve under him, to sail with him, to turn over to him life with its thousand problems and the universe with its myriad mysteries. Indeed it would seem that the sanity of the educated mind is ultimately dependent upon faith in God. Knowledge is chiefly a revelation of the Infinite. With every advance of science the universe grows more complicated. The torch of discovery leads only farther in upon the Eternal mystery. The shoreless universe surrounds man, and as he advances in civilization his own humanity becomes to him of infinite concern. Love is the crown of life, and as it comes to its coronation it is with the gravest solicitude. To allow love to

take its way, to permit the heart to mellow, to throw out a thousand tendrils, to involve its peace with the welfare of kindred, with the happiness of communities and peoples, with the fortune of humanity, is to run a fearful risk. Love must go mad or it must go to God. Without God humanity must break down; it cannot, in a godless universe, support the burden of its own heart. To defeat the movement that means recurrence to the condition of the brute, man lays hold upon the idea of God; to escape insanity he makes over his problem to the Eternal mind. Men who keep their humanity and yet deny God end in despair; and men who deny God and who do not fall into despair shed their humanity as mere impedimenta in the brutal march of existence.

Normal believers in God do not begin belief upon the finished proof of the reality of his being. They inherit the great bequest; they are heirs of the highest wisdom of the race upon the ultimate meaning of the universe. They come into a world where the Christian idea of God is in power as the best that the human intellect can do upon this supreme subject. The Christian idea of God is the accepted truth; education applies that accepted truth to the new mind and the new generation. The devout mother's piety and prayers and sacramental love

weave the high conception into the warp and woof of the young soul; the sense of ancestry gives power to belief. God is our fathers' God. Social feeling is a tide setting toward the same shore. The young are drawn into faith through sympathy with the faithful. Patriotism makes for the same goal. The God of Israel was primarily a national God, and it was because Jehovah had reality for the nation that he had infinite significance and attraction for the individual. The religion of a nation tells powerfully upon its patriotism. The nation whose history and ideals are essentially Christian draws its lover irresistibly into the mood of reverential sympathy. It was a patriot who said of his people, "Thy God is thy glory." Great patriots from Demosthenes to Gladstone, in a succession but rarely broken, have been carried upon the strong current of their sympathy with all sides of the nation's life into belief in the national religion. Lincoln delivering his second inaugural stands for the combined patriotism and faith of his country. The battle for righteousness on earth supports itself through belief in the Eternal righteousness.

Somewhere in this process of education the current philosophy of theism makes its power felt. The world as a dependent wonder and as burning with intelligence, human society as set in its

material environment for high ends, and human history as a record of unimaginable progress, impress every thoughtful mind, and yield, in one form or another, the great rational vindications of the inherited belief. Thus when the normal believer is questioned as to the source of his belief in God his answer should be that he found the idea in power upon his arrival here, that his earliest and holiest education made it part of his being, that the sense of ancestry, the social impulse, the patriotic passion, and finally the reigning philosophy confirmed him in his new possession. The normal believer finds God, in the first instance, as he finds his mother. He grows into the feeling and the perception that this person is his mother because he has been trained toward this issue from the beginning. The love in which he finds himself enfolded, the ministry that unweariedly waits upon him, the presence that renews his life and peace and that daily draws out into stronger and happier forms the sense of sonhood, carries him into the unquestioning belief that this woman is his mother. Should he doubt the reality of his assurance he would instantly suspect himself a fool. His faith that this woman is his mother rests upon the witness of love and life. He was brought up to think that way, he has looked upon the world from this centre and through

this light, and that he is right in his attitude and conviction he has not even the shadow of a doubt. Theistic education is simply domestic education in its widest form. The idea of God is the enfolding atmosphere of thought and feeling; it modifies all early associations and interests; it stands over the growing life in an incessant unconscious ministry; it is the undiscerned fountain of the progressive idealization of existence, the centre from which all things are regarded and the light in which they are beheld. The consciousness of God thus goes with the normal youth as the day goes with him. He lives in it, society has its being in it, the universe moves in it. Thus close to the mind of youth in Christian society and inseparable from it, thus inevitable, universal, and gloriously real is the conception of God.

But this is only the beginnings of faith. The unconscious psychology of belief must give an account of itself to the metaphysics of belief. Professor James profoundly says that reasons should be given why men do pray rather than why they should pray. Prayer is a psychological fact and should be made to yield its law and logic. Similarly reasons should be stated why men do believe in God; but this belief is a psychological fact. The idea that has been imparted by education must become a witness for

itself. While the educational aspect and the psychological genesis of the idea are profoundly important, the appeal should be made for the great idea to the highest tribunal. The believer in God must test his inheritance; that which he has accepted from others he must justify to himself. The highest idea of faith cannot rest upon the grounds of tradition and education. The idea of source is important, the idea of worth and validity is infinitely more important. The day comes when the believer, knowing well the origin of his faith in God, begins to consider the truth of it.

What is the proof of God's being to which one may come who longs to rest only upon ascertained reality? The answer to this question is both close at hand and of infinite significance. God is known as the ideal strength of the soul; and thus he comes to be known as the ideal strength of the world. The Jewish temple had three concentric inclosures; the court of the Gentiles, the holy place, and the holy of holies. The traditional philosophy of the being of God, the argument, ontological, cosmological, teleological, is of the court of the Gentiles. It is a respectable place, and the crowd is great and impressive; but it is not even in the temple. It is significant as an outside witness, an imposing introduction, an affecting preliminary. The re-

ligious history of mankind at its best, the story of apostles, prophets, martyrs, and saints, the record of Christianity in the nations, is the holy place. It is indeed sacred and beautiful, a vast interior witness to the reality of the living God. But beyond it is the supreme sanctuary of the soul. There in silence and awe and loneliness the believer sees God face to face. Moses on the hillside looking upon the burning bush, Isaiah in the temple in the hour of his awful vision, Paul on his way to Damascus, Luther climbing the papal stairs with the consciousness of direct access to God making him wild with joy, Edwards walking on the banks of the Connecticut full of the sense of the Eternal beauty, are types of what is meant. Highest of all, Jesus in the wilderness temptation, in the Tabor transfiguration, in the Gethsemane agony, in the hour of mortal passion upon the cross, is the revelation of the path into the holy of holies.

In the light of the personal ideal God's face first appears. Is it an illusion or a reality? The answer to that question covers the fundamental issue between theism and atheism. The watershed of belief and unbelief lies in the difference of attitude toward the personal ideal. The negation of God occurs first of all in the spirit. It is not a speculative movement; in the majority of instances it is not a conscious mental process.

It is something infinitely deeper and closer to the heart of life. It is primarily a practical operation, a decision and bent of the will, a cherished mood of the spirit. The speculative denial of God is trivial compared with the vital denial. The philosophic negative rises into serious importance only as the reasoned justification of the practical. Life is not only deeper than thought; it is also the source of one's interest in thought. Atheism means, therefore, in its profoundest aspect, settled selfishness, contented earthliness, mad desire for pleasure, indifference to the cries of men suffering from immemorial inhumanities, the conservation of the pitiless soul, the expulsion of the ideal. Obviously this sort of atheism is compatible with any amount of nominal belief. It is a beggarly business to confine attention to the speculative denial of God in the world and ignore the only supremely serious mood both in the world and in the church, the practical denial. The legend that should most concern the true theist is that which is written upon the banner of the majority of believers and which describes an inward personal condition: "Our lamps are gone out."

The real affirmation of God begins with the serious acknowledgment of the ideal. It makes a requisition upon the personal will. It calls for honor in the centres of baseness, valor in the

heart of cowardice, purity in the midst of shame, self-sacrifice in the ways of self-indulgence, righteousness in an environment crowded with bribes to unrighteousness. Examples are here essential to clearness. When one, in the strength of the ideal, overcomes the incentive to cowardice, like Jacob upon meeting his brother, the appeal of shame with Joseph, the enticement to ease, the deception of a false humility, the current of headlong error as in the instance of Moses, of Jeremiah, and of Paul; when one goes into every sphere of life, and there, in the name of the ideal, meets and overwhelms the baseness, sees and struggles to do the duty, notes and tries to improve the privilege, confesses and endeavors to carry the burden, feels and longs to transfigure the whole sorrowful actual of existence, he is in the holy of holies. One is then coming within sight of the real proof of God's being. The midnight wrestle of the ancient wayfarer is repeated; once more the soul is interlocked with the Infinite. Life preserved, advanced in spite of failure, pushed on through penitence, kept in forward movement in the teeth of hostility, carried up into more and better, making covenant only with the best, like a mountain-climber looking away toward the summit of human character; life thus conserved, increased, guided, and crowned with hope goes in the strength of the undeniable God. The grace

by which the human spirit gains upon its moral goal is the grace of God. The proof of God's existence that is final (for the fact) is given with every genuine moral achievement. The victorious moral will, marching in the light of the moral ideal, is the great witness for God.

The witness for God is open to increase. The best is yet to be. Insight is not the first but the final mood of the doer of righteousness. The philosophy of the divine life in man is the issue of that life. Hegel's beautiful comparison of philosophy to the owl of Minerva should be freed from its note of sadness. It is true that the day is far spent, that it is towards evening as it deepens into dusk before the divine bird sets out upon her flight. But to this the day has come; this is its meaning and consecration. There need be no sigh that the morning was unconscious of the issue to which it was sure to come in the evening. The owl of Minerva was present from the beginning, and although seen only in the evening, she gave divinity to the whole day. It is true that life must be lived before philosophy can do its perfect work. But her power is in the entire process of the strenuous career. She herself is withheld as the infinite reward of the servant of the ideal. She is the sunset into which the day struggles through all its stress of storm. The man who as son and

brother, friend and lover, husband and father, citizen and sharer in the world's industry, servant of his kind and of the Infinite, has gone in the strength and holy passion of the ideal comes to his best faith at the last. The exceptions are owing to physical causes. For the normal believer the full truth is the glorious sundown at the earthly limit of love and service.

Here is the real beginning of the theistic argument. Man must find God in himself if he would find God beyond himself. It is with theism as Plato found it to be with righteousness. For the sake of weak eyes it is useful to look at righteousness as it is written in large style in the order of the ideal state; but this is only introductory to the final vision of righteousness as it lives in the soul of the ideal man. There one finds the true ethical beginning and the standard to which one must ever return for light. It is the man who has found God in his own moral life, who in following the ideal of personal righteousness has become conscious of superhuman support who is best able to see whatever divine meaning there may be in nature and in human history. The moral idealist is a being of ends, of ends that are of infinite worth and that are in progressive realization. He is on his way home and the highest is his place of rest. From this luminous interior he looks

upon nature, as one looks upon the cathedral window from the inside; he notes colors, designs, figures, symbols, and great meanings that do not exist for the person who is without moral purpose, and who looks upon the wonder from the outside. Evolution would seem to be a true reading of natural history. It is natural history read in the light of its end. Bacon deprecated the presence of final causes in science; but modern science is chiefly the interpretation of the facts of nature upon the assumption of ends. The movement of the cosmos from the fire mist to the heaven of modern astronomy, of life in the earth in its primitive form to man, can be understood only by the idealist. Nature as idealist is knowable only to man the idealist. Development in the cosmos means most to the person who is undergoing in his own life the largest and noblest development. He who in his personal evolution has seen God face to face is best qualified to trace his footsteps in rocks and stars, and to read his mind in the growth of the living world. Nature at first means nothing to the mind. It is man's vast and dumb brother; and after the human spirit has learned to think and speak, the next duty is to unseal the lips of nature. The great wonder is finally known as living through personal life, as having behind it a mighty history through personal his-

tory, as beating forward in a great silent aspiration and setting with inevitable strength toward some far-off goal through the personal movement upon the moral ideal. Nature in human thought necessarily becomes a kind of larger and lower man; it is the name for the life that seeks through an infinite aggregate of forms renewed and higher expressions of itself. And because nature is a life advancing upon ends that are upon the whole successively higher, it becomes a witness for the Intelligence that is revealed as Moral Intelligence in the history of the faithful soul.

Human history is significant only from the inside. One may as reasonably expect a child to construe a passage from Thucydides as to look for an appreciation of the theistic value of history from a man who honestly entertains no exacting moral ideal. The world is appreciable on all sides only through the appropriate powers. For the blind there is no color even when the earth is dyed in the hues of sunset. For the deaf there is no music even when the streets are full of the cheerful speech of man to man, even when the summer woods are one great symphony. The earth is out there, but for the appreciation of it one must bring the senses in their keen integrity. Philosophy is here as the great and growing world-thought of mankind;

art is here as the monumental expression of beauty; the accumulated intellectual and spiritual treasure of the race is here; and yet the treasure can be appreciated only when the individual brings his awakened intelligence to bear upon it. Human history is the blank landscape of the blind, the mute world of the deaf, the unsuspected intellectual treasure of the race to the dormant mind, until the moral ideal takes possession of the individual soul. The theistic inference from the annals of mankind can be intelligently drawn only by the man who lives in the stress of the moral process. It is the brook that may understand the river; both have source and movement and end. It is the inland sea that may appreciate the ocean; both have tides and answer to the same ruling power. It is the individual fighter for righteousness who sees the reality of the racial fight for the same end; and as he knows that the single combat is in the light and strength of the Divine ideal he is able to believe that the universal battle has its impulse and aim from this high presence. The soul with its own epochs carries the key to the epochs of history. It is from the elevation to which one is lifted by the Lord that one is able to survey the land that is promised to the Lord's people.

Upon this question of the proof of God's ex-

istence the conclusion is that all theistic argument that is worth anything begins in the moral history of the individual man. Without this interior personal discovery of God the discussions about his being are infinite in their dreary unproductiveness. The key to the universe lies in personality, otherwise there is no key. The key to the moral universe is in the moral personality, or again there is no key. Nature is but a sphinx, and human history a tragedy until the eyes of the lover and doer of righteousness rest upon them. It is the God within who finds the God without, and in the calling of deep to deep the voice that breaks the silence and that begins and that sustains the divine dialogue is the voice of the dutiful soul. The philosophical argument for the being of God is but the rendering, in universal form, of the intellectual and moral demand of the personal spirit; and where this demand does not exist the scientific process of theistic proof awakens no response. The pursuit of the moral ideal is the path to certainty about God. Where the universe has become helper in the struggle to overtake the moral best, one can run no risk in calling the universe God. And where one is a successful pursuer of ideal ends, one can appreciate nature in so far as she lives in the pursuit of an ideal end; one can, further, appreciate the grand his-

toric movement of mankind upon an ideal end. Thus ideal ends explain both nature and human history, and God is given in the grand pursuit, in the strength that makes it possible, in the achievement that makes it noble, and yet more in the light that guides it.

> "Not of the sunlight,
> Not of the moonlight,
> Not of the starlight!
> O young mariner,
> Down to the haven,
> Call your companions,
> Launch your vessel,
> And crowd your canvas,
> And, ere it vanishes
> Over the margin,
> After it, follow it,
> Follow The Gleam."

III

The existence of God is thus an assurance to man through man; the reality of God is a discovery by man for man. The ultimate position is that God is the necessity of humanity. If we did not need him, we should not seek him. If God were not essential to man's life, even were his existence forced upon the mind, man would take no vital interest in him. The God who does not answer to man's needs can never satisfy man's reason. Reason is the supreme servant of life, and in the service of life reason hears the footsteps of the advancing God, and

goes onward to meet him. Power may account for much, wisdom and power may account for more; but both together cannot account for man. It should always be borne in mind that the quest for God is essentially the search for the full account and final meaning of human life. Before they can suffice as the maker of man wisdom and power must rise into love. For the genuine life of mankind is love; as it comes to itself, that life comes to love. The love of man seeks for the origin of itself in the love of God.

The mode of the Divine existence is a question raised by the claim that his character is love. The series of questions covered by the symbol "The Trinity" concern the moral being of God. We have a social humanity. Have we a social Deity as the ground of it? In this social humanity the individual person is not only no obstruction; he is essential. Humanity is a fellowship of personal spirits. Is there any hint here as to the nature of the archetypal fellowship behind humanity. Out of what, out of whom, did the social whole constituted by the sum of human persons come? Has the human effect anything to say concerning the Divine cause? Further, social humanity is an altruistic humanity. Genuine egoism is perfected through genuine altruism. Selfhood comes to its best

in love; love is a mood of man in the great organism of society. If you take away the social life of the individual would love remain? Is not man the lover, one among many, one who shares the life of others, one whose life is shared by others? Is not love dependent upon the integrity of the individual, and of the society in which he lives? Without the individual there could be no love; of that we are clear. Is it not equally clear that without society there could be no love? A being out of all relation to other lives, with no other beings to whom he can stand related, who is neither son nor husband nor father nor brother nor citizen nor child of God, could never become a lover. Lover means altruist, and therefore the closed egoist excludes the lover.

This is the truth about man. Humanity is a social whole made of individual persons in one vast intercommunion of being. Humanity is created on the altruistic plan, and the education of life consists in taming its wild egoism, in realizing the genuine selfhood of the individual through respect for others, through service, fellowship, and love. Has this truth about the nature of man anything to tell us about the possible nature of God? If God is the Lord and Giver of our humanity, can we in any measure divine the character of the Giver from

the nature of his gift? Here is our problem: we seek for the God who is the full and final account of humanity. Here is our method in dealing with the problem: we find the essential nature of humanity, and we try to read the character of God through that essential humanity.

I am aware that the conception of the Divine nature for which the Trinity is the symbol is widely held to be a hopeless tangle of contradictions. I am aware that it is by many considered the supreme absurdity of theology. In his comments upon Berkeley's "Siris," John S. Mill remarks that the treatise begins with Tar-water and ends with the Trinity, and he adds that the sections on Tar-water are the best part of the work. This remark of Mill is due to the fact that in his judgment tar-water had some value for afflicted humanity, while the Trinity had none. But for a popular exhibition of the supposed absurdities of this doctrine we must go to the pages of Matthew Arnold. In "Literature and Dogma" this famous passage occurs on the Trinity as seen in the doctrine of justification. "In imagining a sort of infinitely magnified and improved Lord Shaftesbury, with a race of vile offenders to deal with, whom his natural goodness would incline him to let off, only his sense of justice will not allow it; then a younger Lord Shaftesbury, on the scale of his

father and very dear to him, who might live in grandeur and splendor if he liked, but who prefers to leave his home, to go and live among the race of offenders, and to be put to an ignominious death, on condition that his merits shall be counted against their demerits, and that his father's goodness shall be restrained no longer from taking effect, but any offender shall be admitted to the benefit in simply pleading the satisfaction made by the son; and then, finally, a third Lord Shaftesbury, still on the same high scale, who keeps very much in the background, and works in a very occult manner, but very efficaciously nevertheless, and who is busy in applying everywhere the benefits of the son's satisfaction, and the father's goodness; in an imagination, I say, such as this, there is nothing degrading, and this is precisely the Protestant story of Justification. And how awe of the first Lord Shaftesbury, gratitude and love toward the second, and earnest coöperation with the third may fill and rule men's hearts so as to transform their conduct we need not go about to show, for we have all seen it with our eyes. But after all, the question sooner or later arises: Is it sure? Can what is here assumed be verified? And this is the real objection . . . to the Protestant doctrine as a basis for conduct, not that it is a degrading superstition, but that it

is not sure; that it assumes what cannot be verified." In plain words the doctrine of the Trinity in itself and in its operation may be classed as a wholesome myth or legend. It is not a degrading superstition; but it is the product of the metaphysical imagination taken as fact, as exact truth. The fine sarcasm of the description makes unnecessary any violent repudiation of the doctrine of the Trinity as inherently absurd. It is the wholesome legend of the three Lord Shaftesburys. For many years among "devout women" and among men who are like them this legend will pass for truth. For them a difficulty of the intelligence does not count. "To think they know what passed in the Council of the Trinity is not hard to them; they could easily think they knew what were the hangings of the Trinity's council-chamber."[1]

Disregard for the doctrine of the Trinity is not confined to writers like Mill and Arnold. There are many teachers of Christianity to whom it is only an extra-Christian speculation, wholly foreign to the sublime but simple ethical idealism of the Gospel. Others there are who do not object to the Trinity on the ground of its alien origin, but because it is devoid of meaning for the moral life of mankind. In an able and interesting paper in the "Independent," Dr. Ward

[1] *Literature and Dogma*, pp. 278–280.

writes: "The doctrine of the Trinity is not essential to Christianity because it has nothing to do with love."[1] If this objection were valid, if indeed the reality for which the word Trinity stands had nothing to do with love, I for one should have no further interest in it. It is because I believe that the moral life of God is bound up with the reality of which the Trinity is the symbol that I hold it to be essential to an enduring faith. It is because I believe the nature of God as conceived by the Trinity to be the ground of the moral life of man that I regard it as of fundamental moment. Doubtless the Trinity has been discussed as if it were merely an intellectual puzzle. It has been taught as an absolute mystery into which human reason could not advance a step. Teachers of the Trinity and historians of ecclesiastical history have too often been content to show that the doctrine had its origin in the necessity of making room for Christ in the Godhead, and in the further necessity of lifting into the heart of God the transforming spirit of the Christian religion. These contentions of learned men are no doubt in a great measure true. When it is added that the doctrine of the Trinity is an evolution of thinkers who construed Christianity in terms of Greek philosophy, who looked upon the new

[1] *Independent*, June 12, 1902.

religion that had risen like a second sun upon midday, through the colored windows of Hellenic civilization, something important is added to the history of the origin of the doctrine. The question of origin is important, and yet it is subordinate. The great question is that of meaning, and of truth. The deepest objection to Professor Paine's book on "The Evolution of Trinitarianism" is that he regards his subject so much as a field for dialectical sport, and that so far as I now recall he does not devote a single page to the meaning of the doctrine. What was Athanasius contending for? What was the human worth of the conception for the sake of which he stood against the world? Behind the dialectical movement there must be the human sense of meaning, of worth, of truth. To play off the whole subject as the history of the vain and even ridiculous endeavor to hold to three Gods, and yet to claim that these three are one, may issue in an entertaining, but surely not in a profound or profitable book. Barren discussions are plentiful upon every article of the Christian creed. It needs no ghost to tell us that. Much like the wilderness with no hope of ever bursting into bloom are vast sections of the Trinitarian dispute. We must not, however, doom a subject by judgment upon its barren treatment. Nor because the history of discussion upon the Trin-

ity shows an endless seesaw between three Gods and one God in three modes of manifestation will a lover of truth turn away from the alluring theme. He will insist upon the search for the meaning of this world-old discussion; more important still, he will seek the reality behind the symbol. This is my purpose. I do not care for a word or a symbol in itself considered; but I am convinced that underneath this word and symbol is a truth without which the life of faith cannot last.

What is that truth? The essentially social nature of God; the faith that he is in his innermost being an eternal family. The Trinity is a word, and it should call up that which stands behind it. The discussion about three distinct persons in one God and a God in absolute simplicity of being should reduce itself to its ultimate form. There is little to be gained from a new edition of the old Trinitarianism and the old Unitarianism. There is little profit in a mere rehearsal of the Nicene and the Ante-Nicene dispute. Dialectics have exhausted their interest, if not their power, in the formal treatment of the subject; and history has told her accurate and impartial tale a hundred times. The old battlefield has been pretty much deserted by both parties, one might almost say by all parties. The Trinitarian tradition seems to me

of immeasurable worth; but the Trinitarian discussion must take on new form. It must reduce itself to a consideration of the comparative worth of the two competing conceptions of the Divine nature — the unitary and the social. This is the fountain of our interest in the ancient debate. We are brought by it face to face with the question whether God is a bare individual or a society in himself. A psychology of God, or a definition of the mode of the Divine being, I regard as impossible; but this does not, in my judgment, close the debate. It simply puts limitations upon it and gives it a new and more fruitful direction. We are thrown back upon the question, Which conception of God, the unitary or the social, is for mankind the freer from embarrassment and of the greater worth?

It is conceded among believers that man is for man the type of God, in other words that God is an infinite man. Here the assumption is that the best possible conception of God is of an ideally perfect man set free from all limitations. And without doubt this is the path to the highest thought of God. That it should appear in this way to the profoundest theistic thinkers is another witness to the fundamental influence of Christianity upon philosophical discussion. For the idea that man plus infinity is God, if it does not originate in the announce-

ment that God minus infinity is in the man Jesus Christ, is at least made living and fruitful by it. Christianity is the interpretation of God through the perfect man, and the exaltation of man through this interpretation. The Master says "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,"[1] and the disciple responds "Now are we children of God."[2] The question before us is, therefore, what does the building of the idea of God after the pattern of the perfect man imply as to the mode of the Divine existence? Is God a bare unit, a pure individual, or is he social, triune in his being?

To superficial thinking the bare unitary conception of God seems to be the simplest and the most consistent. The standard of simplicity and consistency, be it remembered, is man. No man, it is contended, is really three in one. Every man is a unit, and if man is the guide to God, God must be a pure individual. The Trinitarian conception of three persons in one God seems to involve a fatal departure from the human type. It appears to many vigorous and devout minds to issue in a Divine monstrosity. They tell us that their hearts are often moved by Trinitarian passion, but their heads always rebel against Trinitarian mysticism and monstrosity. Let these noble rebel heads be turned for a

[1] John xiv. 9. [2] 1 John iii. 2.

moment upon the simplicity and consistency of the unitary idea of God. Consider here three things; the individualist God and knowledge; the individualist God and love; the individualist God and the social humanity of which he is assumed to be the full and adequate account.

The unitary God is a being by himself. He is the shadow expanded to infinity of the human individual. The man who thinks personality complete in itself apart from other personalities, to whom it is related and in whom it finds moral life, takes this distorted image of himself, expands it to infinity, and turns it into a lonely individualist Deity. But when a man takes himself as type in his quest for God, it is of the utmost importance that he shall understand himself.

Mistaken anthropology is the root of impossible theology. The person who thinks of himself as a sort of Melchizedek, without father, without mother, without genealogy, as standing outside the circle of human relations in a false self-sufficiency, naturally thinks of God under the same conception. But if the maxim is true that one man is no man, it is no less true that a bare unitary God is no God. Man is a person in relation to other persons; only thus are knowledge and love real. And if knowledge and love are real in God his nature must be essentially social.

If then knowledge is real in God, he must have an eternal object of thought. Man cannot think without an object, and again, be it remembered, man is our guide. The first object of thought for man is some aspect of the universe; and it may be said that God is a bare unitary intelligence with an eternal universe for his object. But to assert the eternity of the material universe in the ordinary conception of it is sheer nonsense. For the material universe, as man knows it, takes its specific character from human receptivity. That color is not in things is the first commonplace of philosophy. That hardness and softness and all the other qualities of bodies that imply relation between object and subject are not in things is another commonplace of serious reflection. Space as the form for experience whose origin is exterior, and time as the form for all things and ideas in succession, are part of the constitution of the human mind. Force, the ultimate quality to which the material universe is reduced, is indeed immutable. But force is not man's concrete universe; it is the inferential and philosophized ground of it. Man's universe is force in color, in sound, in resistance, in human sensibility generally; and the peculiar manifestation of force which constitutes our human universe began when man began. The idea of an eternal universe is eter-

nal nonsense. The universe as it is for man began to be with man; and like Samson and the Philistines, when man dies his universe dies with him. As colored, resounding, tangible, sensuous, as ordered in space and in time, it has its birth and death with mankind.

But force remains. What then is force? The best answer would seem to be that it is will abstracted from the intelligence with which it is always in association as known. Will thus abstracted, made unconscious and blind, and put behind the attack which the universe makes upon human sensibility, would seem to be force. If then the universe is ultimately force, it is ultimately will; if it is ultimately will, it is ultimately intelligent will; if it is ultimately intelligent will, it is ultimately God himself. And the unitary God in his prehuman isolation is thus left without a universe, without an object, without reason for being.

Following the analogy of man, God may be an object to himself, and in this way the Divine knowledge remain real. But if this analogy is to be used, it would seem that it should be consistently used. No man is an object to himself in isolation from society. Man is an object to himself in a hundred ways as a physical organization, a mental power, and an ethical character, but always with reference to other persons.

Comparison, contrast, obligation, privilege, and fellowship forever enter into all man's thoughts of himself. If a man should succeed in thinking only of himself he would absolutely contradict his nature; for the individualist in thought is the contradiction of the socialist in being; and the socialist in being is man. When, therefore, following the human analogy, God is made an eternal object to himself, he is thereby conceived as an essentially social being. He is not an eternal egoist in eternal isolation. For nothing could ever come of such a God, and such a God man does not arrive at when he takes his own nature as type. God is a real thinker, upon a real object, in a real way. His thought must be the type of all true thought, his object the standard of every permanent object, his way the pattern for all real relation between subject and object. He must be the personal thinker, the personal object, the personal truth between these two; he must be infinite reality covered by the most sacred of all symbols, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Granting, however, that a unitary God who knows is conceivable, he is conceivable only as a self-sufficient eternal egoist; and as such he must be without love. An eternal altruistic God to whom from all eternity there is no other, in whom there is no other, is about as

palpable an absurdity as can be put into words. Love in man is the passion for another; its existence depends upon the society in which man is placed. Love in God must mean the passion for another; its reality depends upon the society in the Godhead. God's love for himself can be called love only on the ground that in himself he represents society, and if he represents in himself society, say human society possible or actual, his own Godhead is essentially and eternally social. From man's point of view — and confessedly this is the only point of view, unless there is society, of an ineffable kind indeed, in the Godhead — eternal existence would be eternal misery. God is sincerely to be pitied if he is a bare unit, existing alone from eternity. His being is the image of calamity, and life such as his is cannot appear to social man as other than the superlative horror. Greek mythology with all its crude anthropomorphism is much nearer the truth than the ghastly deity obtained by means of the elimination of the social element in man. These primitive Greeks took their entire humanity with them in their search for God; and their gods were at least real, social, and happy. Their existence was the object of man's admiration and aspiration. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is the full statement of the truth at which Greek mythology aimed; the

discovery of the social nature of God through the social nature of man at his highest. Put into the Godhead some reality answering to the words the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and one is able to think of the divine knowledge and love as real, one is able to conceive of God's existence as ineffably blessed, and as containing in itself the ground of human society.

For the problem presented by a unitary Deity becomes still more pressing when one looks for the eternal basis of humanity. How can a social humanity come out of an unsocial deity? Under whatever name, all fullness must be conceived to dwell in him. An archetypal humanity must be in God as the eternal precedent of our humanity. What can an eternal egoist know of altruism? How can God reconstitute his being with the advent of man? How can an unsocial God know parenthood? He is not a father, he has no eternal son; are not a father's passion and a mother's love incomprehensible to him? He is not a son; how then can he understand the filial soul? He is not eternally joined in himself in the substantial power of love; how should he be able to enter into the communion in which humanity stands, in which it comes to ever sublimer consciousness of itself? A God who is a father and a son, and a holy spirit, by courtesy

only, is absolutely out of all relation to human life. Such a deity may have an ornamental use, but he can be in no way essential to man as man.

This is so inevitably true that the social or Trinitarian conception of God has passed over into the Unitarian. Dr. Martineau thinks that the Eternal Son of Trinitarian faith has become the Unitarian object of worship.[1] The truth is we have stolen the anthropology of the Unitarians, and they have stolen the essential theology of the Trinitarians, and thus far neither we nor they have had the courage to acknowledge the theft. The prayers of Theodore Parker reveal this appropriation of essential truth. God is the Parent of man, the Father and the Mother of mankind. And if these expressions are words flung out at an ineffable meaning, that ineffable meaning must be the archetypal humanity in God, and an archetypal humanity must be a social humanity. The great wild soul of Parker is representative of the heart of even the soberest Unitarianism. Unitarians assume that parenthood and sonhood completed in love or communion are eternally in the Godhead. They go on using this great assumption without always seeing where they found it, without pausing to think out consistently its meaning. There

[1] *Essays*, vol. ii. p. 535.

are devout and brave men among them who say frankly that they employ family terms as the highest symbol for the Ineffable. Even this I understand to be essentially Trinitarian ground. The contest is not between any given articulation of Trinitarian doctrine and any given expression of Unitarian teaching. It is profounder than that. Compared with the essential, fundamental issue, the formal dispute is a dispute on the surface. It should not long delay the serious and progressive thinker of to-day. To rehearse an old battle is an easy task; to fight the real battle of the hour is something harder and worthier. The contest to-day is between God as an eternal egoist and God as an eternal socialist. If God is an eternal egoist he is the contradiction of humanity; and as history shows, the distance from deism to atheism, from an unmeaning God to no God at all, is short. If God is an eternal socialist, he is in himself the ground and hope of mankind. The race came out of his being; men are his offspring; and back of the human family is the Eternal family. The Trinity is indeed a mystery, but it seems to me a mystery that saves the reality of God to the world. When one seeks the truth underneath the symbol, and does not put too much stress upon the arithmetical paradox, the Trinity stands for a social God, the only God who can mean anything great to man.

Having considered the unitary conception of the Deity, and the objections to it from the reality of knowledge and love in God, and from his relation to our social human life as ground and hope, it is important at this point that the philosophical path to theistic belief should be clearly seen. Atheism, Deism, and Christian Theism are the positive thoughts about the universe that concern us here. It will be found that they result from the different measures of consistency with which man employs man as the key to the final meaning of the universe. Agnosticism must here be counted out. When genuine it is a logical position. It refuses to apply the human personality as the guide to the nature of the Infinite. When the refusal is genuine, and not a mere trick in the dialectical game, the ground taken is defensible. Any one has a right to be dumb upon the ultimate meaning of life and the universe, on condition that he shall remain dumb. In taking this position one asks simply to be counted out of the discussion; he begs, like the unprepared student in the class-room, to be excused. But in refusing to speak he thereby pledges himself to silence. And the difficulty with the average nineteenth century agnostic is that he does not keep the pledge. He is the preacher of a theory of the universe usually of the materialistic type, and

his agnosticism is but a shield held up in the day of battle against a spiritualistic theory. Atheism thus uniformed and armed is none the less atheism. Agnosticism as the logical device and strategy of a positive belief about the universe is agnosticism only in name. It is the belief that is the real antagonist, and not its agnostic mask. Still it is to be allowed that pure, self-consistent agnosticism in the presence of the universe is a defensible attitude. When it can say of itself with truth "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth," it must be admitted that in its absolute silence it is impregnable. It is one way of behaving toward the Infinite; it is a way whose principle is human ignorance and incapacity. It may have a silent piety of its own, and a spirit of truth and love in the heart of the humanities. It is no concern of this discussion; therefore peace be to its dumb and sorrowful soul.

Every creature that thinks must think of the Infinite according to its own nature. "The lions if they could have pictured a god would have pictured him in fashion like a lion; the horses like a horse; the oxen like an ox." So far old Xenophanes is right. The difficulty with his examples lies in the assumption, "if they could have pictured a god." They do not think about the universe, and therefore they are freed from the

necessity of distorting the Infinite. But man thinks about the universe, and he can think about it only in the terms of his own nature. He may plead that thought in man implies thought in the Maker of man, and therefore that mind in the creature is the highest path to the mind of the Creator. He may claim that human personality is the supreme fact in the finite world, and therefore is the best witness for the meaning of the infinite world. But whether with justification or without it, it is self-evident that man can interpret the universe only by the use of himself as interpreter. The fundamental position is here repeated that every being that thinks about the universe must think in the form of its own nature.

Atheism is negative only in form. It denies that intelligence is the source of life, and in this denial it affirms the opposite view. It elaborates this antitheistic view. It develops the cosmos from matter, motion, energy, force. Upon this force, blind, heartless, irresponsible, it builds the universe. And the criticism to be made upon this procedure is that it is a distorted procedure. It uses man in a distorted form as the guide to its conclusion; and the remark must be made that only one of two courses is possible. Either discredit man as the measure of all things, and fall back into agnosticism, or cease distort-

ing the human measure and go on to Christian theism. Force is found only in will; what is called force in nature is but an interpretation of an alien through the conscious human will. If then the world beyond man is to be labeled with a human name, why should it receive one so ghostly? Why should force which is known only as a form of mental life be divorced from it, emptied of its real content, and in the guise of the palest abstraction pasted upon the universe? Materialism, the popular form of atheism, is simply the interpretation of the universe through will minus intelligence. It is the abstraction of force from all connection with consciousness, and the assumption that this is the final reality.

It should be clearly noted that this materialistic or atheistic procedure is both unscientific and unphilosophic. It is a mutilation of fact; power is known nowhere apart from mind; therefore it is unscientific. It is unphilosophic; it takes man as guide to the meaning of the universe, and it refuses to follow where the guide leads. It distorts man, reduces him to an unconscious blind will, and through this dissected man, using the member with which it is pleased to fall in love, it judges the nature of being. Atheism is the result of the worst kind of anthropomorphism. It robs man of his distinctive

attributes, takes away his mind, reduces him to blindness and then employs him as guide to the ultimate truth. It is strange that men do not see that a non-human view of the universe is an absolute impossibility. Even nihilism is preceded by the effacement of the human personality. The vanishing ego utters the incantation under which the worlds melt into thin air. It is equally strange that thinkers who admit that they are compelled to use man as the measure of all things should starve their man into a bloodless and mindless abstraction. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God; and the philosopher who employs the fool as his typical man can come to no other conclusion.

Deism interprets the universe according to the same human standard; but the man of deism is more of a man than the pale abstraction of atheism. The deistic man is an individual being with intelligence, moral feeling, and will; and therefore the God of deism is a thinker, somewhat of a lover, and an eternal doer. He is the individual human being plus infinity. He is not the mere shadow of reality, a will emptied of all purpose, divorced from all intelligence, and reduced to blind power. He is living and real. Both from the scientific and philosophic points of view deism is a vast improvement upon materialism or atheism. The human standard, the

deistic man, is real and so far undistorted; and to a given limit deism is true to its own principle of procedure. Man is the guide to God; and man is an individual being.

Still deism is an inconsistent position. It is a half-way house between atheism and Christian theism. Like atheism, deism employs only an emaciated man. The deistic man is a Melchizedek. He has no ancestry and no posterity. He is an individual thread taken out of the social fabric in which he is found, and in which his life has its meaning. Eliminate from man his social nature, and the result is a part and not the whole, a residuum that is not man. And the God of deism is conceived in accordance with this human Melchizedek. He is an infinite Melchizedek. He is not a father, he is not a son, he is not a holy community in himself. Such a God is unintelligible save through his human type. Deism is constructed upon a monstrous man, and Unitarianism when taken at its word is built upon the same foundation. If God is necessarily the image of man plus infinity, why should he not be the reflex of the full man? The individual man is no man; and the God to whom the individual man leads is an abstraction that can be of no service to the universe. Thus it is that deism cannot survive. Atheism makes merry over its lonely individual-

istic God who is in no vital relation to the universe; and Christian theism exposes its suicidal inconsistency. The deistic God can be of no posssible use to our human world; an egoistic God and an altruistic humanity are in hopeless contradiction to each other. An altruistic God may convert an egoistic man on the ground of the latent social nature in the egoist; but an altruistic humanity can do nothing with an egoistic Deity. According to the terms in which it is conceived, his nature is eternally unitary and unsocial. The fact is that the deistic God is the reflex of men who have forgotten the truth of their own humanity. Again bad anthropology leads to bad theology. The selfish man gives rise to the selfish God; the man who has not yet come to the sense of the society in which alone he is real, conceives of God as like himself a pure individualist. For the person to whom love is the final reality in human life, and for whom the society in which love exerts its power is essential, the deistic God is morally inconceivable. For social and loving man a unitary Supreme Being has no interest.

Christian theism tries to be faithful to the whole man in its endeavor through man to find God. With atheism and deism it is eager to pass over the incidental and to fix attention only upon the essential in man. But against

atheism it keeps together will and intelligence and real being; against deism it refuses to separate the individual man and the social man. Man is man only in society. Parenthood, sonhood, and the essential social relations are part of man's being. Without them he could not be; in them he is what he is. And it is precisely this social man who needs God, for whom God has moral meaning. This man with ancestry, with posterity, with a life that is a life in humanity, seeks for an adequate fountain of moral life, and for the eternal ground of it. If God is man plus infinity it must be the social man carried to his highest. Eternal fatherhood, eternal sonhood, eternal love must be the truth of the Godhead; there must be in God the archetype of humanity. The whole man is man in society, and if the human principle is faithfully used, the whole God must be a God with an ineffable society in himself.

The line of argument here used may be summarized as follows. The consistent use of man as the guide to God necessitates a God with society in himself. Any other kind of God is the result of a meagre, emaciated, and unreal man. Further, no other God is worth anything as cause and fountain of mankind. An individualistic Deity can yield only an individualistic universe; a society in the glory of love is

an absolute contradiction to such a supreme egoist. If, therefore, the cause must equal the effect, the social man can be accounted for only by the social God. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."[1] The working of our principle is obvious in the grand old words. The social man is the reflex of the social God; the social God is the reflex of the social man; thus the earliest faith and the latest meet in the same great conclusion. Finally, any other kind of God is an enigma, and the symbol of eternal misery. He is an enigma because an individualist God as the author of a social universe is an impenetrable mystery. The eternal life of such a Deity cannot be the archetype of the universe in time; his pretemporal being is without any conceivable relation to temporal being; he and our human universe fall apart, and between them there is a great gulf fixed. The unitary conception of God is the symbol of misery. The pretemporal Deity in utter loneliness, inhabiting by himself his own eternity, is a picture of unhappiness wrought up, by supreme art, to the highest and most exquisite torture. Solitary confinement for an eternity is appalling even for the Eternal. In contrast to this the full man finds the living God. He is a God out of whose nature human

[1] Genesis i. 26.

society has come; his pretemporal life is a type of the human world in time. God is thus in himself ideal society, ideal humanity; and the name for this living God, the vision of whom is man's highest joy, is the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Thus the conception that seems self-contradictory turns out to be the only consistent and enduring idea of God. It is properly claimed that the problem of the person of Christ led the church into the doctrine of the Trinity. Jesus Christ, the Divine man, as the guide to God, could lead only to the God who is in himself an eternal archetypal society. The uniqueness of Jesus Christ here, as elsewhere, is that he is the light of the world. His perfection forced the issue between the social and the unsocial Deity. He did it for himself, and for his brethren; and what he did is the sign of what he was. Man must rise to Christ before he can see the true God. Anthropology must first rise to Christology; then it may rise to true theology.

In dealing with the nature of God, we are dealing with the nature of man set free from all limitation. It is true that modesty and tentativeness should lie in the spirit of our reasonings upon this ineffable theme. To certain minds, hints, suggestions, intimations of possible truth, are more acceptable in this region than definite

conclusions. Other minds finding a sure principle of interpretation hold to it honestly and courageously. They do this without in the least forgetting either the uncertainty that forever shadows human speculation or the unexplorable mystery of God's being. To this class the writer belongs. He knows what doubt is; it is indeed part of his existence. He believes, however, that the true path to God is along the line of human personality. And thus believing, he sees no reason to waver or hesitate in the full logical expression of his fundamental assumption; or to apologize for his confidence in the resulting conclusions.

All the more is the writer inclined to this confidence since the principle is one which every man can test for himself. We go to God on account of our human life; and we seek a God answering to the nature and vocation of humanity. Can a unitary Deity suit the need? Can an individualist God match our nature and opportunity? Can an infinite Melchizedek be the ground of human society? Ask thought, and go deeper; ask life to say what its nature is and what its needs are; then reason from the social creation to the social maker. And if this seems like reaching the Trinity on the strength of our humanity, and apart from the revelation in Jesus Christ, let us resist this antithesis as un-

real. Humanity is here, and God is here, and the glory of Jesus Christ lies in the light that he has poured upon both. He has taught us that the final truth about man is life in the fellowship of love; he has taught us that this fellowship on earth is possible because of the ineffable fellowship of love in God.

Once more it must be said that the way to God is not so much through the organization of thought as through the order and necessity of life. The word is nigh man; it is in his heart, in the structure and hunger of his being. Theism has gone far away for its ground when it should have remained at home. The mightiest witness is there. The telescope is nothing to the child or the savage; it is little to the ignorant. These persons may have it near them for years and yet miss the glory of the heavens. It is the person who studies it, who discovers its character, who can turn it to amazing uses, and by it fill his heart with the vision of a universe of splendors before unimagined and unimaginable. For the majority of even serious people human life is the least understood of all great things. It is the least respected. When will men come to know themselves? When will they uncover their heads and unsandal their feet in the sacred presence of life? When will they take human life with its divine weakness, its immortal hunger,

its ranges of regret and grief, its whole uplift of toil, suffering, and aspiration, and turn it full upon the being of God? Then indeed God shall be brought near to man; and he who is over all in his Fatherhood, and through all in his Sonhood, shall be in all as the might of the Holy Spirit.

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